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D E F E N C E

O F

Mr. MICHAEL MOORHOUSE,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

HE travelled as a preacher in connection with the Rev. Mr. Wesley, fourteen years; but was suddenly turned out of that connection with contempt, without a hearing; and degraded not only in large cities and towns, but in some places from house to house among the methodists; that they should look upon him as a gazing stock, and as "*One of the vilest wretches that ever was in the connection since methodism existed.*"

THE methodists were advised by the preachers to shut their doors against him, and many of them did so.

HE also mentions the crime for which he was so suddenly turned out and so universally degraded. Page 79.

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ERRATA.

Page	6,	line	25,	for	substances	read	substance
—	8,	—	29,	strike out	and	leap	
—	9,	—	3,	for	priest's office,	read	the priest's office
—	55,	—	23,	for	undermined,	read	underwritten
—	92,	—	11,	for	groundly,	read	groundless
—	113,	—	18,	strike out	you		
—	124,	—	32,	for	puplit:	read	pulpit

The curious reader will find several little inaccuracies, which I think are not worth notice.

T H E P R E F A C E.

I DO not act the hypocrite, when I say I am heartily sorry that the Rev. Mr. W-fl-y and his advisers have driven me to take this method of appealing to the public. Long I have born insult and abuse ; and thought I would not discover the nakedness of the land : nor have I been hasty in the steps I have taken. Mr. W-fl-y and his advisers has had time enough to consider what they would do : for (near four years ago) after abundance of unchristian usage, I wrote to the Rev. Mr. W-fl-y, as follows. “ I should have been driven out of your connection long since, but for the following reasons.

First I looked upon it ~~no good sign~~, when people left religious connections. Secondly, other people would have thought the same by me, if I had left the connection of methodist preachers. And Thirdly, I should not have hung my head like one who had done something amiss, and had been turned out guilty. Therefore, Fourthly ; I should have printed, and published my reasons for leaving the connection. And I am suspicious, my reasons would but have done little honour, either to the Rev. Mr. W-f--y or his advisers, many of whom I love in the truth.”

But there was no notice taken of my private letter, only more slander and abuse : So then I printed a circular letter, and sent every travelling preacher in the connection one, for which *crime* I was turned out of the connection, as the reader will find.

I then

I then waited near three years to see what would be the issue ; and as I meet with nothing, only more slander and abuse. I shall now lay my case before the public that they may judge. Indeed matters might have been compromised, the grievances I complained of removed, and the dispute between me, Mr. W-f-y and others quashed ; so as to have lain among the secrets of the conference, untill that day when Jesus Christ shall be revealed in flaming fire, to take vengeance of all them who know not God. But the governors of the conference did not choose to do any thing but insult me more and more : and as they have been so hasty in First, abusing me from year to year ; and Secondly, in turning me out of the connection with contempt, without a hearing ; and Thirdly, in degrading me from cities, to towns and villages, among the methodist, and threatening me with *law*, I shall appeal to them who will hear. But first I think it is necessary to give the reader some account of my life, how, and by what means I become a preacher.

The D E F E N C E, &c.

WHEN I was very young, I had deep, and serious thoughts about Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell. And at the age of thirteen, deep convictions and distress of mind concerning my poor helpless ruined state, which my sins and follies had reduced and brought me too; the more I read, the more I saw my misery, and danger. But the Lord graciously inclined my heart to private prayer, this I did with all the power of my Soul. I prayed for instruction, and read for wisdom. And after many months seeking of the Lord without any proper instructions, wherein I spent many wearisome nights and troublesome days, I found two or three leaves of an old book which I read, and found the following advice, that if any persons were in distress about the Salvation of their Souls, they should spread their wants before the Lord in earnest prayer, living a life of watchfulness, and expecting God to answer their petitions to the joy and comfort of their hearts. Being thus encouraged, I went into a private corner of my chamber at bedtime, and thought except God answered me, I would continue praying all night, untill the next morning, looking for, and expecting an answer from the Lord. But glory be to God on high! he soon prevented me

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with

with his goodness. And removed all my sorrows by speaking peace unto my Soul. My sorrow was turned ~~into~~ joy, my burden was taken away, and I could say with the prophet, *Isai. chap, xii, Tho' thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away; and thou comfortest me.* I thought I would not fear, tho' legions of evil angels should surround me, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength, and my song; he is become my Salvation. Being filled with love and joy and peace, I laid me down to sleep; and in the morning, could rejoice in God with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. But I thought if I told any man what the Lord had done for my Soul, he would say that I was mad, so I told no one, what the Lord had done for me. But I could say with the blind man, one thing I know, that as I was blind, I now see. I could say; that I was a poor Hell deserving sinner, and that the Lord had shewed me his mercy, that my transgressions were forgiven, and my sins blotted out, that I had the testimony of God's Spirit bearing witness with my spirit, that I was born of God. And I could cry "Abba Father." Altho' I had never heard of such a thing as Justification by faith, or the forgiveness of Sins in this life, I then enjoyed all the privileges of religion; and the substances of these scriptures "He that hath the son hath life---he that believeth hath the witness in himself---he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life &c."

But for want of spiritual instruction, all these joys began to die away, my comforts were gone, and my sweet hope of everlasting life was lost, and little appearance of any good left; untill I was about 19 years of age; when by the providence of God I got acquainted with some people called Methodists, and by their conversation, reading, explaining the Scripture, and hearing of preaching; I was taught the way

way of God more perfectly, and by the grace of God I have continued in the way or by the way-side begging in spite of all opposition ever since.

My design at present is not to enlarge upon the many troubles I have gone through ; nor the many comforts that God has graciously conferred upon so unworthy a creature, yet one instance of divine goodness shall not be forgotten. After having received many divine blessings and comforts from the Lord ; and through unwatchfulness lost them again and again, I fell into a state of reasoning which sunk me deep into the mire of despair, the enemy of Souls suggested many truths, which I could not deny ; such as these, that I had received many blessings from the Lord, from time, to time, and I had carelessly trifled them all away. That I had made my requests known to God in my distress, and he had heard my cry, and again redressed my grievances ; but I was now in a poor dry, and thirsty land, and God was justly angry with me ; and would never shew me the light of his heavenly countenance more, &c. But the enemy also suggested many untruths, such as these that if I began to pray for any more grace or mercy, the Lord would strike me dead, and make my condition in hell, worse than the vilest. But if I did not pray one word, nor ever think upon God more I might be spared a little longer out of Tophet's burning lake. Now I thought I should perish after all the many blessing, and comforts I had had, the trouble that fell upon me, the horrors that seized me, and the grievous despair that surrounded me were more than any tongue can tell. To think of being eternally banished from the Lord, from the bleeding prince of peace, from the company of all good men, Saints and Angels ! to weep and groan in that place prepared for the Devil and his Angels ! to have no

more rest day nor night for ever, were thoughts that crouded in upon my mind, untill my burden was intolerable, to heavy to be borne, I cried out O ! wretched man that I am who shall deliver thee from the body of this death, but while I stood trembling in this deplorable condition, this gracious thought came into my mind : That if I must perish I would perish praying ; If I could say God be merciful to me a Sinner before I dropped into hell, I would, the enemy strongly suggested that if I did, I should drop down immediately into utter ruin, from whence there would be no returning' However with trembling joints I fell upon my knees, fearing that the earth would open her mouth and let me in as it did Corah and his company ; but how was I astonished to find that at that moment while I cried for mercy, God spake peace, yea sweet peace unto my troubled mind, and filled my Soul with bleeding, dying love. This was a time never to be forgotten, O ! that I could praise the Lord in some melodius sonnet, and tell the people, tell the people, what things he hath done ! for he has had compassion on the ignorant ; and mercy upon the poor hell-deserving sinner, he hath raised up from the dunghill, and set at liberty those who were fast bound in misery and iron, praise ye the Lord, for my sorrow was again turned into rejoicing, my darkness into day, O ! come taste and see how good the Lord is, now I could walk, and run, and leap and leap, and praise God.

After a variety of changes, both in temporal, and spiritual things, the Lord by his providence brought about a thing which I did not seek after, namely ; to be a preacher of the Gospel among the people called **METHODISTS**. In the year 1772 the traveling preachers spake to me about leaving business, and devoting myself wholly to travel, I told them if it was thought

thought proper for me to try I had no objection, but I should wait the course of providence. I would not push myself into priests office, nay I did not ask any man to recommend me, but they spake of me to Mr. W-f-y and I was appointed to travel in Ireland.

After spending a few months with Mr. Jaco in Dublin, I went down into the North of Ireland, and notwithstanding I was much comforted among the people in preaching, and meeting the little societies, I lost my health apace, the Living in Ireland is so different to what it is in England. Potatoes and butter milk for breakfast. Potatoes and butter milk for dinner, sometimes a dish of bad tea in the afternoon, and sometimes none ; potatoes and butter milk for supper, preaching once, twice, and thrice a day beside traveling all sorts of weather, and lying in damp beds, my constitution was soon broke down, so that I had the ague in all its different forms, and of all the different sorts, I suppose that ever existed shaking every day, then every second day, then every third day, then six times a day ; and one while regularly, every eighth day, untill I was almost brought down to the Grave. However I thought as I was in the Lord's work, it was of little consequence whether I died there or in some other place, so I continued to preach and travel, untill I could scarcely mount my horse, and when I was mounted, was hard set to ride seven or eight miles, my head and eyes were so oppressed with pain, that for fourteen or sixteen weeks I could scarce look upon the light, or read a chapter in the Bible, altho I traveled and preached as usual.

After I had been there four years, during which time I had ruined my constitution, I returned to England, where I expected to find much comfort and consolation ; but the way to ZION is up the hill for every man who travels thither, and in particular

cular for many preachers of the Gospel, so I only entered upon a new set of trials, which has run like a river, sometimes broader and sometimes narrower ever since, "But hitherto the Lord hath helped me."

In 1777 I was married, after much consultation with Mr. W-f--y about it, for I had such a regard for him, that I would not take one step ; nor lift my hand to displease him, so I had his full consent and approbation ; yet when I was married ; he ; and the preachers in conference did not chuse to allow me any thing for my wife to live upon, they had so many calls for their money. Upon my return from from the Bristol conference, I told her how matters stood ; and that it was a very great burden to my mind, that she could not have the priviledge of the other preachers wives, but she desired me to take no notice of it, saying, her life had always been a suffering life and she expected it would continue so till death, but she replied I would have you "Continue in the Lord's work, do not let me hinder you in your master's service, if you give over traveling, the people will say it is long of me, and that will break my heart ; press forward"

We prepared for our appointed place namely Newcastle upon Tyne, and it seemed as if we were appointed to suffer hardships ; for as my wife had no allowance many people looked upon me as one in disgrace, which they thought was the occasion of it, and she being desirous of living without being troublesome to anybody sat down to live at that plentiful place upon bread and milk, potatoes with salt and the like ; only that she dined out once a week, her general way of living, notwithstanding the affliction and sickness she laboured under being with child, was ; for most part of the time as follows. Bread and milk for breakfast, sung a hymn and went to prayer, boiled a few pota-

potatoes for dinner, read a chapter, sung a hymn and went to prayer, at night supped on bread and milk and closed the day with reading, singing, and prayer. As she enjoyed so poor a state of health, I desired her over and over with tears to provide something better for herself; but her answer was this; "I live as well as thou did in Ireland; let me alone, I am truly happy; and thou knows here is a time coming on when I shall have to lying, and we shall want all the little money we have, and I have no way of getting any and I do not want to be troublesome to any body; I do not want my husband to go begging for money at the conference to have the dark looks of Mr. W-f-y, nor any of the preachers in connection, I would rather make any hard shift that I possibly could, than have my husband slighted on my account."

These and the like answers were what I commonly had from her, when I was desiring her to provide something better to live upon; untill some of the people began to talk about it to the S-----s and then she had something better provided a little before her death---her gracious life was like her death, she had been accustomed to bear the cross from the time she began to follow Jesus of Nazereth; her way was to say little, and pray much, and as she used to say when any thing troubled her, she went into private, and told her heavenly father of it, and he who seeth in secret heard her complaints, and answered all her petitions.

She used to say the preachers, and preachers wives, ought to be very frugal; for the money they had to live upon was the gift of God in a particular manner; and ought not to be thrown away or carelessly wasted.

A little before her death she seemed to be very sensible she should die when ever the time came that she

she should be delivered ; and several circumstances seemed to confirm the opinion.

One evening as she sat by the fire in her own room where another woman that was come to see her was sitting also, the room door was opened by a person all in white, who stood looking into the room for some time ; the woman who sat by the fire cried, "come in ; come in," but the person did not advance, the woman then stood up in order to go toward the door to introduce the stranger, but the person all in white withdrew, shutting the door after her, the woman then snatched up the candle which was then burning upon the table, and suddenly opened the door, looking out all over the lobby with the utmost dilligence, but could not find any thing living, man or woman. This she thought was a token of her death. Another circumstance.

A man who was appointed for the purpose ; use to rap at our room door a little after four o'clock, to call me up to preach at five, and one morning we were both awakened by a rapping as usual, to which we both answered, but when I had lighted my candle and looked at my watch ; I found it only a little past three ; and upon opening the door, could not find any body at all, this we also thought was some token of her death.

When she took her labour, her Soul seemed to be as a watered garden, before the Lord. And as she expected dying at this time, she now began to view the promised land not very far off : and this encreased her joy, so she was enabled to praise the Lord saying "He hath not been a barren wilderness nor dry breasts to my Soul" and walking with the assistance of some of the women up and down the room would say "Come let us sing once more, before I go hence
to

to Paradise," so they sang a little at a time, rejoicing in God : and the Lord granted her all that she so frequently prayed for, namely ; Grace, to suffer with patience, and to finish well.

She had a very sore time, and was an example of suffering and patience, that all admired who had an opportunity of seeing her.

After she was delivered of a son who was still born, she was expected to die immediately : some who were present spake of fetching me, for I was about ten miles out of the Town at that time, the Doctor opposed it, saying, "Her husband can be of no use," she answered, "It does not signify much if I cannot see him again in this world, I shall see him again at the last day, and it will soon be here ; the Lord's will be done." However Mr. S. was kind enough to bring me the sorrowful tidings that my wife had got her bed, the child dead, and she in the utmost danger.

When I came home I found her solidly filled with the gracious presence of God, just waiting for her Lord to beckon her away, and said to me with a humble heavenly look, "I shall never rise out of this bed more." I answered if the Lord does take you away from me, his will be done. But if it can be consistent with his glory and our souls good ; O ! that he would spare you a little longer. But after two days struggling with sore affliction she died. Such was the will of heaven, she was ripe, and glory was ready.

During this short, but sharp period of affliction, her conversation was truly affecting ; and she gave the strongest proofs of her confidence in God, and spake many things which I shall never forget. Such as, "The Lord is my support and strength.---Father I stretch my hands to thee.---I long to be with Jesus. O that the Lord would ease me of my burden, and

my soul away to its resting place, come Lord Jesus come quickly."

I asked her if she found her soul dead to all below ; for she had a Mother seventy years of age, that was above a hundred miles off, who was very dear to her, but now she answered, " Dead to every thing.---But if the Lord does take me from thee, before thou speak comfortable to my sister Betty, and tell my poor Mother to take care of her soul." I asked her again, " Can you leave me? " she answered, " Yes ; thou wilt not be long after me. Before thou live near thy God, for greater is he that is with thee, than all that are against thee." As she was always fond of singing, I asked her if we should sing her away to the Church if the Lord took her from my arms. She answered with much life and pleasure, saying, " Sing ! yes to be sure, and sing that Hymn,

" Happy Soul thy days are ended,
 " All thy mourning days below :
 " Go by Angel guards attended,
 " To the sight of Jesus go.

" Waiting to receive thy Spirit,
 " Lo ! the Saviour stands above,
 " Shews the purchase of his merit,
 " Reaches out the Crown of Love.

" Struggle through thy latest passion,
 " To thy dear Redeemer's breast,
 " To his uttermost Salvation,
 " To his Everlasting rest.

" For the joy he sets before thee,
 " Bear a momentary pain,
 " Die to live a life of Glory,
 " Suffer with thy Lord to Reign."

When she had repeated this hymn all by art, with her soul filled with joy and rapture, likewise many more affecting sayings, and earnest prayers to God for a release from her sore bondage; she was observed to grow worse, I was called up in the night to see her once more, before she took her last farewell of all things here below; I found her sitting up in a dying condition, she looked very wishfully at me, and said, "O! will you give me up and let me go to my rest," I answered with resignation, and a heart filled with sorrow, "Yes my dear I do give you up," She said, "Then lay me down." we did so and she never spoke one word more, but sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, April 5th, 1778.

Her pains and her sorrows are o'er.

With a heart oppressed with grief I buried her, who was much more dear to me than life, whose death was like her life an ornament to Religion. She died in the full triumph of faith, her evidence had long been very clear, and her soul solidly filled with God, for many months before her dissolution, and according to her desire, the singers went on the street before the Corps singing,

"Happy soul thy days are ended, &c."

While thousands attended the mournful procession with weeping eyes, crying, "O! that I may but finish my course as well as Mrs. Moorhouse has done; that my last end may but be like her's."

As my dear wife had been so frugal in her life as to live upon fifteen or sixteen pence a week, for many weeks together, she left me money enough to pay off all her funeral expences which I immediately did; the physician who attended her, a number of times both before, and at her last sickness forgave me all that he might have demanded, I then paid off the apothecary myself, nor did any man so much

as offer me one single fixpence, only one who gave half a guinea to one of the leader's wives, for the rent of the room in which my wife died ; (I can mention that gentleman's name, and the leader's wife to whom he gave it, if you choose to push me to it.) She laid out about seven shillings and six pence of the money on that account and did what she pleased with the remainder.

I have often observed when the Lord begins to exercise his people, that he tries them as he did poor Job, with one trial after another, and sometimes when the Soul seems not able to bear any more than what it already groans under. So now it was with me. Some of my friends from whom I expected comfort, turned to be my enemies, tho' to this day I never knew for what Mr. C. who had always been tolerably pert ; began to be much more so, and told me one day " Sir, you have not behaved with sufficient respect to me ; and what do you know and what have you seen ? " I am sorry that I have seen so much wickedness among professors of religion, but Solomon tells us Eccls. chap, viii, ver. x. *That he saw the wicked buried*, (probably with great pomp and splendor) who had come and gone to the place of the Holy Courts of Judgment, and fine places of public worship, so in his time wicked men attended the most religious assemblies among the children of God.

Many other ill-natured things he said, and did to me both while my dear wife was sick at her death and afterwards, altho I had been much longer in the Lord's work, and had suffered many more hardships for the cause of God, and religion than ever he had ; but he was the assistant.

That morning ; a few hours after my wife was
dead,

dead, I went into that gentleman's room thinking to find comfort in his company and conversation, he shook his head, looked black, and cried out; "I hope this will do you good my friend; I hope this will do you good," I was ready to drop down; to hear him make a sort of triumph over me in my distress, I wondered what I had done either to him or any body else, that the death of my dear partner, which brought so heavy an affliction upon me, should be matter of triumph to Mr. C. I looked upon it cruel, and hard to be borne. However; I sat down, and with a silent flood of tears gave vent to my passion, recollecting that when David was driven out of Jerusalem by his own son Absalom, whom he had brought up and nourished, to encrease his grief, She-mai came out and cursed him, and cast stones at him, and when Abai-shai proposed to take off his head for cursing the King, David said, "Let him alone, the Lord has bidden him: who can tell but the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day."

While I thought on these things, I was a little comforted, and was enabled patiently to say, it is the Lord let him do what seemeth him good.

The Leeds conference being about four months after the death of my wife, I thought I would go thither, and as I had a high opinion of Mr. W-f-y and the preachers; I fully expected to find much comfort and consolation in the company of so many religious men, but here I met with a strange disappointment; my heavenly father had another cup of bit- ters for me to drink, which was given to me by the hand of Mr. W-f-y and three or four of his flatter- ers. It was a large cup well filled.

The design of the preachers meeting together in conference was not only to change the preachers; and to order their temporal concerns: but to hear
and

and settle grievances that might happen between any of the preachers ; and how far that is now practised, and whether the institution is not strangely corrupted, I shall shew in another place.

I told my brethren in the conference that I had had a very sorrowful trying year at Newcastle ; that Mr. C. had behaved to me unkindly in my affliction, in many respects, and had upbraided me with want of respect. Mr. C. started up and cried out " I deny the fact ; I deny the fact---And if any man wants my character, there is Mr. S." Mr S. stood up and with a disagreeable look at me, informed the whole conference that the " Sensible people and local preachers at Sunderland, said it would be much for the glory of God if Mr. Moorhouse desisted from traveling, and with regard to what Mr. Moorhouse says concerning Mr. C. I beleive it to be both false and foundationless."

Mr. D. W. stood up to make his speech, saying "I was down in Yarm circuit and I heard that the people said, their Souls were worse the day after Mr Moorhouse had been at their houses, than they were the day before he went." Mr. W-f--y then stood up and pointing at me to make me look as ridiculous as he could, cried out " Well then we must drop him."

The foundation of this last charge I will explain as well as I can, but the other is unknown to me to this day. Mr. D. W. travelled in the Yarm circuit before me, and being as was supposed near forty years of age, was very busy in paying his addresses to a young Girl of about nineteen, the people said it was a very unequal match, and many of them said, if he ever came into that circuit again they would not hear him preach. If he could not teach himself, how could he teach others, &c. I had said that

that some inconveniences might arise to trouble them which they did not foresee, and Mr. D. W. had heard of it. I being newly come from Ireland when I first went into that circuit, the people near Easton asked me many questions concerning that country, and my answers caused too much laughter. The good woman of the house, told me upon the next day, that her Soul was not in so humble a frame as it was the day before, Mr. D. W. had picked this up and two years after told it in the public conference in the blackest manner he could, as if that was the language of the most people in the Yarm circuit, but Mr. D. W. was married as soon as D-l-y was at age, and he has chiefly been in good circuits, where he had a maid to wait upon her, while my poor wife sat down to her potatoes and salt, without a servant.

My Soul was ready to sink under a burden too heavy to be borne. To hear how the preachers went on, as if it had been their hour, and the powers of darkness. I was oppressed with grief for the loss of my dear wife, but now I laboured under such a cloud of temptations that I cannot describe; and not one Soul gave me any comfort at that time. For my enemies were powerful men. How true is that saying of the wise man Solomon, Eccls. chap, iv, ver. i. *"And behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter: and on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter."* tho I have heard since, that many of the preachers were grieved to the heart for me, but not one spoke a single word. Being grieved, ashamed, and lost in thought; I sat down, and all subsided.

At night I went home to my lodgings, but could eat no supper. Mrs. W--dle at whose house I lodged, laboured to comfort me, but all in vain. I
went

went up stairs and wept untill my strength failed me, and while I wept, I reasoned thus. That I had always loved religion from a youth, and especially Methodism. But I was now become a scandal to it, tho I did not know how, nor what I had done to be despised in the public conference. I had done nothing capital that I could recollect, and I had suffered much for Christ before I was a preacher, and now I suffered from every quarter.

After tossing away another wearisome night, I went with a heavy heart to hear preaching the next morning at five o'clock; and as it proved, to have my burden increased. For it seemed as if my friends thought they had not insulted me enough the day before. So they took another turn at me; and when Mr. W-f-y had to speak of any other preacher, whom he designed to make look contemptuous in the eyes of the conference, he compared him to me, pointing at me, saying, "I pay no more regard to that man than I do to Michael Moorhouse."

Mr. W-f-y was the only man in the world at that time, whose favour I had long earnestly sought, and did all in my power to please him, and to meet with so much contemptuous usage from him, at a time when I was oppressed with sorrow, was no small grief. But it is through much tribulation, we must enter the kingdom of God. As to Mr. S-----s' conference tale, he did not mention any thing that I had done, or spoke amiss at Sunderland, he had no occasion to particularize, it was enough for him to intimate some great something, for he was like Naaman the Syrian, "A great man with his master but he was a leper" Mr. S. is nearly allied to the Rev. Mr. W-f-y.

At this conference came on a sore debate concerning one T. W--w--k, I do not begin to say all that might

might be said concerning his manner of life, for some years before this time ; how he furnished his house like a gentleman, borrowed money ; entered into partnership, dissolved partnership, borrowed money ; and took up an annuity of a gentlewoman, and she died the second year, leaving T. W---- in quiet possession of the principal ; yet all would not do : his money and credit began to be nearly upon a level, but as I did not know the gentleman at that time, I can only say a little of what the old preachers said in the public conference, who were personally acquainted with him.

This man being one of Mr. W---y's favourites, had got the notion of being a travelling preacher ; and Mr. W---y proposed him to travel as a single man and bring no burden upon the societies ; that Mrs. W---- would stay at home, and by her business, she would maintain herself and her two children. Mr. M--- stood up and said " That is not likely. And will it not be a scandal for us to take a woman's husband from her, and not to allow her something to help to keep the children ; and our societies are already burdened, and other old preachers wives and children are in want, what must we do ? " Many more of the old preachers stood up, and supported Mr. M-h-r's speech, opposing all that even Mr. W---y could say, with becoming fortitude, declaring they thought such a man unworthy of a place among the preachers of the gospel ; that his conduct had been blameable ; his religion itself doubtful ; his call of God to be a travelling preacher doubtful also ; but that he wanted to get into the priest's office for a piece of bread : there was no room to doubt. By such like arguments, the old preachers withstood Mr. W---y so powerfully, that he was obliged to drop it for that time ; he was not appointed for any circuit that conference.

but he sent him out into a circuit a few weeks after, over the heads of all them with whom he pretended to advice. Two years after this, Mr. W-----'s son was proposed for Kingswood school: Mr. M-h-r stood up, and said to Mr W---y, "Sir, did you not tell us T. W---- would travel as a single man, has single men children to send to Kingswood school?" Mr. W---y cried out, "That was the bargain; T. W----'s son was to go to Kingswood school, but his wife was not to have any thing." Mr. W---- stood up and said, "It is probable my wife will never ask you for any thing so long as she lives." Three years after, Mrs. W----- quits her business, sets off with her husband, has her name in the minutes of the conference for provision from the circuits, and affects to have been a fine gentlewoman. Mr. W---y can find a good house ready furnished for her to live in, where the societies can keep a servant to follow the mistress with her great coat and umbrella, in case it should rain when she is on a visit.

This would have made a strange appearance thirty years ago! to have seen a methodist-preacher's wife covered with a great-coat. and a great bonnet covered with an umbrella; and another preacher's wife, who came into the connection in a far more honourable way, sits down to dine upon potatoes,

Here I relate the naked truth, without any farther comment; for I cannot reconcile this practice to the Rev. Mr. W---y's preaching and writing, but more of this hereafter.

But to return to the conference, where this gentleman was first proposed as a travelling preacher. I was appointed for the Leicester circuit, but when the conference broke up, I had wept until I could hardly speak to be heard; and when I came among my own, and my wife's relations, it only encreased my

my

my grief ; when they got about me weeping, and would not be comforted, because the Lord had taken one out of the family, and she was not.

A few weeks after I had got to my circuit, my box came to hand ; and there was interlined upon the direction, “ Men you way,” this I looked upon as a piece of fresh slander, that every body who should look upon the direction of my box, any where in the road between Newcastle upon Tyne and Castle Donnington in Leicestershire, which is one hundred and fifty miles, might see the owner had done something capital amiss, and when it came where I was known, the people would naturally think I was in disgrace : some great man must have done this ; no common man could have had a front for so dirty an action.

By this time I could scarce look any body in the face, for I thought some strange reports must have been circulated, concerning my wickedness ; and I had not heard of it, nor did I know what I had done to make such an uproar at the conference, and that a blot must be fixed upon my box also ; but I see there is a time for the great fishes to devour the little ones.

However, I went on mourning and preaching as well as I could ; the people pitied me, and often mourned over me, for they saw that my grief was great. God was graciously pleased to make my poor preaching a blessing to many, and the Lord was pleased to water my own soul also. But I will hasten away to the London-conference held in 1779.

And here Mr. W---y and his advisers seemed determined to finish me out, and never speak one word to me, nor about me ; for although my wife, who had as good a character as most women in the country, must sit down to potatoes and salt, and I slandered as I was ; T. W---- was got into the priest's

office just upon my wife's death, and my disgrace : and now here was a broken farmer who could no longer get bread, one S. D. a mighty man with Mr. W- -y, and he must be taken into the connection as a travelling preacher, for bread for himself, a wife, and a young family.

Now I will lay this affair down before all who may read, that they may judge.

First, when he was young, he loved ease and pleasure ; which are natural : Secondly, he commenced a travelling preacher : Thirdly, but finding a woman with about seven hundred pounds to her fortune, his call of God to be a travelling preacher was out ; his father gave him about three hundred pounds more, and he Fourthly, set up farming. Fifthly, in about ten years he had farmed it all away, and some hundreds more to it ; so now, Sixthly, his call to be a travelling preacher returned, and having Mr. W.---- on his side to support, and bring him into the connection ; he prepared himself to travel, and we will now see how he prepared himself.

First, Being about two hundred pounds in debt to his landlord, he left the country ; his cattle were driven off to some convenient place, while Mr. T. a man of considerable property, went to the landlord at B- -f- l to patch up the matter up for Mr. D. somehow ; and he did not act a dull part, for the matter was settled nearly thus, that if D. really had no money, the landlord could get none, but if ever S. D. set up in any kind of business, the landlord was to have his two hundred pounds.

Mr. T. having settled the matter thus. returned in full triumph. Mr. D. recalled from banishment, soon after taken into the priest's office for bread for himself and family, the landlord is swindled out of his two hundred pounds ! you may all say what you please, but I think Mr. T. is a keen sensible man.

Secondly,

Secondly, observe another step preparatory to his travelling : he owed about one hundred and seventy pounds to a gentleman at Collumpton ; and so, S. D. went and paid ninety pounds and produces the following receipt ; I think I can remember the most of it word by word, for I saw it with my own eyes, and likewise read it.

“ I acknowledge the receiving of three notes
 “ amounting to ninety pounds, in part of payment
 “ for one hundred and seventy pounds ; and which
 “ I acknowledge for the whole untill S. D. can
 “ pay me the rest.

“ J---s, 1779.”

Being thus prepared for a preacher, Mr. W----- recommended him as a fit man to travel and preach the gospel ; but the old preachers totally set him aside as a man out of the way of becoming a travelling preacher, that it would be a scandal to methodism to take such a man into the connection. However, Mr. W----- went down into Cornwall about three weeks after, and sent off Mr. D. for a travelling preacher, and also made provision in the circuit for his wife and family. Here I could not but be struck with Mr. W-----'s conduct, for I was with him : I saw, that while one preacher's wife had hardly the comforts of life ; yet Mr. W-----'s favourites must have all they want, though all the old preachers in the conference declare they are not fit to be taken into the connection ; but more of this in another place.

Mr. D. set off in full triumph, and some time after Mr. J---s died, leaving a widow, with one daughter, and she made application to Mr. D. for some money, but he produced his acquittance, he is not able to pay, she must loose her money. She then made application to somebody, who laid the case before

fore the conference at London, 1785. But I was told that a great man, whose name I am ashamed to mention, stood up, and said, if she sue D-y for the money I will put in appearance myself; D-y cannot pay, he is not able, I leave this as I find it.

Again I went to Bristol conference, in 1780 with a long letter in my pocket for the Revd. Mr. W----- and another for Mr. —, of Newcastle upon Tyne, who had been very busy in slandering me, and I had some reasons to think, slandered my poor box also. These two letters gave huge offence to Mr. W----- and some of his flatterers, for Mr. J. B----- came to me, and said, "Have you a copy of that manuscript you have given Mr. W-s-y?" I answered, yes; he cried out, "If I had known that you had had a copy of that peice I would have mentioned it in the public conference against your character." I answered, sir; you may go now, it is not too late; the conference is still sitting, and I will go with you, and say all you can against my character, he cried, "I insist upon it being destroyed," I answered, I will not destroy it. Listen ye honest men, who are not acquainted with conference-logic: First God took away my dear wife, and drenched me deep in sorrow: Secondly, I had been unjustly abused in the public conference by Mr. W---y and his flatterers: Third, that same conference, T. W---- was taken into the priests office, for bread. The next year, S. D-- the broken farmer with a wife, and a family, for a maintainance out of the collections of poor honest. hard working people. Fourth, when I had wrote down a fair account of their proceedings, Mr. B--d--d threatened to expose me to be blacken'd again in the public conference. Are these the men who will rise at five o'clock and preach perfection? pray God be gracious to our Souls!

Souls ! we may preach perfection to others, untill our eyes fly out, and be damned by hundreds, if we have no more religion than this.

If the Lord should take away Mr. B--d--d's wife and child, as he did mine, and the preachers fall upon him and abuse him, as they did me, how would he like it ? if they could teach him no more religion, they might teach him more sence, and good manners.

At this same conference came on a long dispute about S. D. The old preachers told Mr W----- that it was totally wrong of him to take such men into the connection, they came in for nothing but a livelihood, and they thought he would bring some public scandal upon the methodists before he would desist &c. &c. but S. D. had been well recommended by Mr. and Mrs. —, Mr. W----'s favourites, and he has been continued in the priests office ever since, for bread for himself, a wife, and six or seven Children.

Some people may think I must be mistaken about S. D-y, but I am not mistaken ; in the debate, I observed the old preachers, who opposed him most, were quite short of information, and if I stood up to speak, somebody always laboured to stop my mouth. So I went to my lodgings, and wrote down all that I have said, concerning the method of his leaving the farm, driving of the cattle, the method made use of by Mr. T. whereby he sharped the landlord out of the two hundred pounds &c. &c. This letter I gave to Mr. M--l-n, and the next morning, Mr. W---y read my letter over in the public conference, Mr. D. and Mr. T. being both present, did not object to any one article that I had wrote. How will they set a face to deny it now ?

This year I was appointed to travel in Leicester-shire,

shire, where I was not well used by one of the preachers, but when some of the people told him they were sorry that he had used me so, he answered, "Mr. Moorhouse has been troublesome; Mr. W-f-y does not like him, and he will be turned out of the connection," so he could insult me, without fear of offending.

I was married a second time, 1781, for which I do, and I hope I always shall bless God; he has been good and gracious to me all my life long, even to the present day; and as complaints continued to circulate at every conference, concerning the want of money, for the encreasing calls of preachers wives and children; I thought my wife should be no burden this year, so she continued in her mantua-making business, near Leicester, and as I was in the Northampton circuit, I went to see her as often as I could.

About July 1782, I took the opportunity of going down to Leicester when the Rev. Mr. W-f-y was there, that I might have the pleasure of accompanying him up to Northampton; for there was no man's company that I esteemed like his; but it has often been the case with me, when I proposed some great happiness to myself, as great a disappointment fell upon me: so before I had rode half a mile, in company with Mr. B. and Mr. R. the two preachers who accompany Mr. W-f-y, one of them began to insult me, and notwithstanding the ground of the insult was foundationless, and every word he said upon the subject was false, yet Mr. B. continued to insult me for miles. When we got to Welford, we stopt to bait our horses; and what with the heat of the day, and grief of mind, to think that there was no end of insult, from first one flattering scycophant, and then another; I could neither eat nor drink;

I laid me down upon the hay in the stable, and wept, till I could weep no longer : many words passed between me and Mr. B. which I drop. However on our way from thence to Northampton, these two gentlemen, desired me to tell them what grieved me ; and if any thing was wrong, they promised they would do all in their power to comfort me, Mr. R. asked me if my wife was with child, and if she would come before her time ? (observe we had been married seven months.) And the good man intimated to me, if that was the case, that he and Mr. B. would both of them speak to Mr. W. for me, and make matters as easy as they could.

I told them my wife was not with child at all, that I wanted none of their help, that whenever I began to defend myself I would make my cause stand by itself, I would ask none of their assistance ; and I have not forgotten that saying yet,

“ ——— I will rely ;

“ On Israel's God he built the sky ;”

I told these two gentlemen that I had often been upon the point of publishing an account of the usage I had met with from Methodist preachers, and if I met with much more such like usage, I would make some great men ashamed of themselves. I had suffered many things which were not easy to be borne ; from many tawring professors of religion ; and for the sake of those Souls whom Christ purchased with his own blood, I had hitherto borne with it, and put up all in silence. But if there was not a change among some men, I did not think it my duty to be silent much longer. Mr. B. exclaimed, “ Brother Moorhouse ; I hope you would not reap up old things.” Observe, Mr. B. reaped up an old thing that was not true ; and he knew it was not true before he reaped it up, but when I reaped up an old thing that was true he was “ Sorry to hear me reap up old things.”

things " Mr. R. cried out " Brother Moorhouse ; I find you give way to temptation, you do no good, nor get no good," the good man promised me he would give me all the comfort he could. Now it is come, how sweet it is.

As our circuit went within fifty miles of London, I thought I would go to the conference; once more. When I got there I met with Mr. B-d-d, poor man, he was just at his wit's end to know what to do with me ; for he cried out " I am afraid you will hurt the peoples Souls where you lodge ; I do not know where to send you ;" however after much hesitation, and abundance of spiteful language, such as I had heard plenty of before, he sent me to Mr. W---n's, may the Lord rain down his choicest blessings upon that family, they have been a comfort to me, many a time since.

According to the custom of the conference Mr. — stood up and asked "Has any body ought against Michael Moorhouse?" No preacher then present had any thing capital against me, but for want of greater crimes, Mr. W---t informed the conference, that many people said I had a bad voice, and Mr. V---y stood up, and said, " I was down in the Northampton circuit, and I heard at one place that Mr. Moorhouse had been talking to some young women, and made them laugh." But he said he hoped I should take warning, and do so no more. One or two of the old preachers fell upon those two shallow gentlemen, and made them both sit down ashamed, to think that they should bring such poor trash as that to a public conference, and lay it down against my character. But Mr. W----y rose up with a degree of spirit, that did honour to his cause, and cried out, " But I have something against him; for as we came up from Leicester the other day,
and

and stopped at Welford to bait our horses, Michael Moorhouse would not go into the house with us ; he preferred the company of the horses in the stable before ours ; and that---that---I know not what to call---that diabolical letter he wrote B. S," it is probable a copy of " That---that---I know not what to call---that diabolical letter" may make its appearance in some future edition, and let the public see if they can find a name for it, for it is beyond the judgment of the wisest man at the public conference, to tell what to call it.

This I call conference logic ; and I am sorry that I shall have to say something more about it by and by. But take a short view of this. First, on my way from Leicester to Welford, two gentlemen preachers insulted me, and grieved me, untill I could neither eat nor drink. About a fortnight after I went to the conference. And second, I. B-d-d fell upon me, he did not know where to send me to lodge. Third, the two gentlemen I have mentioned, brought their complaints. And fourth, the Rev. Mr. W. crowned all by saying, that I preferred the company of the horses in the stable before his. This was like the rest of the logic I had met with. I was oppressed beyond measure, and simply sought a private place where I might pour out my Soul to God in sighs and tears, and the Rev. Mr. W---y slandered me in the public conference for so doing.

Having had as much ill usage as was sufficient, I left the place two days before the rest of the preachers, and this occasioned another squabble ; the Rev. Mr. W---y declared he would turn me out of the connection for it. But one or two interceded for me, so I was not turned out at that time. I shall make one or two remarks here. And first ; when a man was admitted into the connection of

methodist preachers twenty years ago there was some regard had to his call, from God to the work of the ministry; but now his call to the ministry can easily be dispensed with, and if he does not please the governor of the conference, both he, and all his flatterers may insult him wherever they meet him; and if they can find nothing in his conduct that may have some colour of reason to turn him out of the connection; turn him out for that damnable sin of leaving the conference two days before the rest of the preachers; what would the Rev. Mr. W---y do? what would he be at? I am so ashamed of the above, that I will leave it for the present, and lay open another scene.

It had been matter of great concern, at many preceeding conferences; how the preaching houses should be secured to the methodists interest; so that the preachers should not be under the power of any trustees. For it was observed, that many independent preachers were in the power of the trustees; and if they walked ever so disorderly, the preacher was afraid of reprovng them, lest they should take offence; and turn him out of his place, and he, his wife, and children come to want; so this was an inlet to ungodliness, and the downfall of religion; for the preacher could not reprove them, upon whom, he, and his family entirely depended for their whole and sole subsistence. And at one Leeds conference there was liberty given several afternoons, for all who ever choose to come, to be present; accordingly the preaching-house was filled as full as it well could be: and a gentleman sitting in the midst of the audience lectured upon the downfall of the dissenters in general; and the impossibility of their rising again, for a long time together; the foundation of his arguments ran thus, "The Church of England is

is a fallen church : but they have the word of God read among them ; therefore she may rise again. The Dissenters are a fallen people : they have not the word of God read among them ; therefore they can never rise." Add to this, that the preacher is afraid of reproving any of the subscribing members, and the congregation is in a pitiful condition. How much truth there is contained in the above, I do not take upon me to say. But,

To prevent those evils ; it was thought advisable, to form a plan, that the preachers themselves should be the whole and sole trustees, for all the preaching-houses that were then settled upon, what was called, the conference-plan. After much consultation and advice ; it was determined at Bristol conference, 1783, that the Rev. Mr. W---y should draw up a deed which should give a legal specification to the phrase " The conference of the people called Methodists " accordingly in February 1784, the deed made its appearance, but it was as contrary to what was expected, as any thing in the world could be ; and as contrary to the old plan which had long been settled among the preachers, for carrying on the work of God after the Rev. Mr. W---'s death, as it was repugnant to justice, honesty, and truth ; but who contrived that deed I know not. The old plan referred to, had given general satisfaction to both preachers and hearers ; was printed in the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Works, vol. xv. page 348, 349, and again in 1780, in the large minutes, and sold publickly throughout the three kingdoms.

The old plan runs thus, " On notice of my death
 " let all the preachers in Britain and Ireland repair
 " to London in six weeks ; let them seek God by
 " fasting and prayer ; let them draw up articles of
 " agreement to be signed by those who chuse to act
 " in

“ in consort ; let those who do not chuse it be dis-
 “ missed in the most friendly manner possible. Let
 “ them chuse by votes a committee of three, five
 “ or seven, one of them to be Moderator. Let this
 “ committee propose preachers to be tried and ad-
 “ mitted, or excluded : fix the time of the ensuing
 “ conference, &c.” This plan was looked upon as
 a means under God to cement the preachers so
 closely one to another, that the union would be per-
 petual ; but when the new deed made its appearance,
 it had contradicted it, and set aside all that ever had
 been wrote and published for many years together.
 And as I have a copy of the deed which was then
 “ enrolled in his Majesty’s high court of Chancery,”
 by me, I cannot be mistaken.

After the preamble which contains an explanation
 of the design ; the author mentions a hundred
 preachers names, of his *own chusing*, who are to have
 the powers and priviledges therein mentioned, and
 that these hundred have power over the rest of the
 preachers, to put in, and put out, “ *for any cause* ”
 that they may think fit or necessary, and not only so,
 but forty of these members being met together can
 do any business ; nay, whatsoever is done by a ma-
 jority of forty “ Shall be had, taken, and be the
 act of the whole conference to all intents, purposes,
 and constructions whatsoever. Second article, Chan.
 Deed.”

Again, whatever number soever meets at any
 of the yearly conferences, a majority of those mem-
 bers can do all the business. But the others, if any
 are permitted to be present, have no voice, negative
 nor positive. But if there are only forty, a majority
 of that forty has power to turn a member, or any
 other preacher out of the connection. “ For *any*
cause which to the conference may seem fit or
 “ neces-

“ necessary ; and every member of the conference
 “ so expelled and put out shall cease to be a member
 “ thereof to all intents and purposes, as though
 “ he was naturally dead, and the conference im-
 “ mediately after the expulsion of any member
 “ thereof as aforesaid, shall elect another person to
 “ be a member of the conference, instead of such
 “ member so expelled.” Article eighth, Chan. Deed.
 And again.

“ The conference shall and may dispence with or
 “ consent to the absence of any member, from any
 “ of the said yearly assemblies, for *any cause* which
 “ the conference may see fit or necessary. Article
 “ seventh, Chan. Deed.

Now if any man who understands the general end
 of the preachers meeting together once a year in con-
 ference, and consider over the above quotations, he
 may easily see this new deed is fully fraught with
 injustice, partiality, oppression, and abuse. And how
 any man, or company of men, professing godliness,
 preaching up holiness, and recommending poor lost
 sinners to the all sufficient Saviour, could do such
 a thing, I think would puzzle the oldest man upon
 earth.

First, those select hundred has power over all
 the preaching houses that have been, or may be
 settled upon the conference plan : and then they
 choose out the best of the circuits for themselves, and
 station the other preachers to fill up vacancies. And
 if a preacher thinks himself ill used, and begins to re-
 monstrate the case with the members, he must say
 little, for they have power to expell him for “ *any*
cause that the conference may see fit or neces-
 sary” without any regard to his age, honesty, a mi-
 nister of Christ, an ambaffador of God. &c. &c.
 they can dispence with all, and turn him out with
 contempt,

contempt, short of money, and degrade him throughout the three kingdoms, and threaten to ruin him, and his family with "Law" in case he makes any resistance. Again.

By the old plan if any complaint was lodged against a brother preacher, he was heard in conference, and every man had a right to speak his sentiments, concerning the preacher so arraigned. By the new deed, if he has a misunderstanding with one of the members, he is tried by his enemies, and they will soon decide upon him. But if he has any friends there who are members, how will that be? they must listen to what the president, and a few leading members say, for they must remember, they themselves stand upon slippery ground. They may be turned out "for *any cause* which the conference may see fit or necessary." Again.

By the old plan if any preacher could not sign the agreement, which was to be entered into, after the Rev. Mr. W---y's death, he was to be dismissed in the most friendly manner. By the new deed we are dismissed, a hundred miles off, unheard, with contempt, and then degraded.

But what makes this new plan more unaccountable is, by the old plan all the preachers were to meet together six weeks after the Rev. Mr. W---y's death, and "Chuse by vote, a committee of three, five, or seven, one of them to be moderator." But the new deed has usurped the authority over all the above propositions, and has chosen a hundred preachers, to govern the other hundred in an arbitrary manner, without ever asking their consent, is not this injustice and oppression?

But what makes this new deed more unaccountable and unreasonable still is, many of the old preachers are left out, and many young unexperienced

perienced preachers are set to govern the old faithful weather-beaten servants of God, who has born the heat and burden of the day. Well may the citizens of London call it the deed of darkness, being hatched in the deep of winter, and in the deepest secrecy; it appears to me one of those seven abominations the lord hateth, "Sowing discord among brethren." And when the people comes to know that their old favourite preachers whom God made a blessing to their souls, are now made servants to a number of young unexperienced men, by a deed which cost about two hundred pounds; and that these young men have to assist at a conference to "expel" an old preacher, may be more honourable than some of themselves, "for *any cause* which to the conference may seem fit or necessary," it may make a change in the face of things. But again, with regard to sending of dispensations, is another amazing stretch of conference power; so if a man, not being a member, have a complaint to lay before his brethren that is not like to please the conference, first, he must not go without leave; secondly, if he gets leave, it is very likely he may be over mouthed, and sent off with more sorrow, and grief of heart than when he went; and then the conference can write him a dispensation that he must stay away from the next, and the next, and the next conference, "The circuit must not be left naked."

God bless the poor old preachers, and raise them up some friends to comfort them in their sorrowful pilgrimage, for this deed has opened a wide door for oppression and abuse. And in order to show this, I will consider myself at a conference, and here I see a number of young and old preachers gathered together and it is opened with, "If any man has ought against any of the preachers let him speak;

now is the time, but let it be done in love." The president then asked, "Has any body aught against brother S.?" Mr. B. replied, I have heard some disagreeable things of him, but as he is not here, I shall not mention them. Again: "Has any body aught against brother O.?" Mr. C. replied, Sir, I have many things to lay to his charge, but as he is not here I shall drop them. Again: "Has any body aught against brother W.?" Mr. C. replied, Sir, I was down in that circuit, and the people told me such things; I will just mention them, if they are not true, he may clear himself as he is here. N. B. these things were two years old, Brother W. thought himself dirtily slandered, and left the connection before the year was out. Again: "Has any body aught against brother G.?" Mr. R. replied, Sir, as I came through his circuit to this conference, I heard some things that I was sorry to hear, but I think I will not mention them, I hope he will mend for the future.

My heart fills up with sorrow while I write! Let me pour out my soul to God that he may bear his arm for the display of his glory, the good of his church, and the downfall of sin and Satan's kingdom; and I will open another scene.

There came on a critical case, a man who was not liked by a few leading members of the conference, and they wanted to get him out of the connection, though they could find nothing in him worthy of death, or of bonds; however, one asked, "What shall we do with Mr. Mc-N?" Mr. M--r answered, "Send him to a circuit where you know he will not go; and let him go there or no whither. &c. &c." This conversation commonly takes up more time than I chuse to mention.

Now this is the way the preachers are "examined one by one," but if a plain honest man should be permitted

permitted to be present to hear this examination "one by one," would he not think that many of the old preachers were slandered "one by one?" and that in the most unchristian manner that could well be invented, so that by-standers could not tell whether these preachers were guilty of murder, adultery, drunkennets, lying, theft, or "a bad voice;" while the accusations runs in such undetermined language as this; "I think he is not fit for a travelling preacher, but it is nothing to me. I was sorry to hear the people say what they did say; but I shall say nothing. I should not be willing to travel with a man of his character; according to the reports that I have heard of him: &c. &c."

Now if a plain honest man who understood true religion only; and was not acquainted with this sort of logic, which was practised yearly, at every conference that ever I was at, what would he think? would he not stand confounded? while he stands thus confounded, he may hear one say to the president, "Sir; this sort of practice will never do, I am ashamed to hear the distant preachers slandered thus who are not here to answer for themselves; we shall be all confusion; what shall we do? Many of the preachers whose characters are thus impeached in this public conference, are now one, two, and some of them three hundred miles off; I am sorry to hear it." But the president may be heard to cry out; "No; whatsoever is said in this conference must not be mentioned again it must never go out at that door." Mr. P. replied, "Sir, I think there should be nothing said in this conference by methodist preachers, but what might be spoken out of doors in the street."

After these young men have brought, and heard the reports that have been brought, or sent to the

ference, they give their judgment concerning the old absent preachers, who has been slandered ; perhaps at many conferences before this. They then proceed to consider how the preachers are to be stationed the ensuing year, these young men who are members of the conference, and have a power to station their old brethren, first consider how to suit their own conveniencies in the best of the circuits ; so far as they can. But in general every circuit must have one of these chosen members to speak well of the deed, and to silence the murmurings of any preacher who has been ill used ; they stop his mouth by telling him if he does not like, he “ may leave the connection :” but they remember to tell him, “ If you do leave, go away quietly ; do not hurt the work ; if it suits you and your wife, you may go home, there is a young man will supply your place, &c. &c.”

I say when they have stationed themselves, as well as they can, and filled up the vacancies with the old preachers, they then proceed to consider what money must be given to such, and such preachers wives, and children. Likewise the preachers widows, and whose children must be admitted into Kingswood school, and how much money must be given to such, and such a preacher, to assist him to carry his wife in a coach to his new circuit ; and how much money must be given to any member of the conference to ride himself in the coach, then how many of the old preachers names are to be published in the magazines, as “ desisting ” from travelling, who have offended some of the heads of the conference, who have power “ to expel and put out, for *any cause* which to the conference may seem fit or necessary ;” then they consider who are to be taken in upon trial, to fill up the places of the expelled

expelled preachers, &c. &c. All this is done by a select number of preachers, many of whom are young unexperienced men, who knows nothing of the feelings of a father, no more than of the widow, and the old faithful ministers of God are their servants, and must submit to all that these honourable members do at the conference; for whatever is done by a majority of the conference, more or less in number, down to a majority of forty, " Shall be had, taken, and be the act of the whole conference to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever. Art. 2, Chan. Deed." There is no remedy, but " If it suits you and your wife you may go home." With sorrow of heart I write the account, but I pass on as I have done scores of times before now with a heart full of grief, and a soul oppressed with sorrow; to relate, that by the old plan, if a preacher, his wife, or children wanted any thing, and the managers did not attend to supply their wants out of the publick stock; he had a right to bring his case and lay it before his brethren at the conference: but the new deed has cut off as a branch that is withered, and the conference may give him any thing or nothing, and tell him, " If he does not like, to go home, but to go away quietly, and not to hurt the work. Again,

The old plan was designed to unite the preachers together after the Rev. Mr. W-f-y's death, and it was well calculated for that purpose. But the new deed has divided them into two companies while he is still living, and laid a foundation for lasting confusion after his death; it contains fifteen articles, which I am afraid are as so many horns to scatter the preachers one from another, and the societies into nothing; or to join other sects, or set up separate parties,

parties, untill the old form of original methodism will be lost, and not one trace remaining.

What strikes me in this, that this abusive " deed of darkness," seems to foresee the end of methodism, and makes provision for its funeral obsequies. " When ever the said conference shall be reduced " under the number of forty members, and continue so reduced for three yearly assemblies thereof successively, or whenever the members thereof shall decline or neglect to meet together annually for the purposes aforesaid, during the space of three years, that then, and in either of the said events, the conference of the people called methodists shall be extinguished, and all the aforesaid powers, privileges and advantages shall cease ; and the said chapels and premises, and all other chapels and premises which now are, or hereafter may be settled, given or conveyed upon the trusts aforesaid, shall vest in the trustees for the time being of the said chappels and premises respectively, and their successors for ever upon trust." Here is an end of Methodism, which is in a great measure fallen a bleeding sacrifice to this deed which was " Enrolled in his Majesty's high Court of Chancery," dated Feb. 28, 1784. An enemy hath done this. But God is not confined, he can carry on his gracious work of salvation by the blood of the Lamb, without any deed of Chancery.

Methodism is now about fifty years old, it has " Grey hairs here and there upon" it, besides many other complaints, the consequence of old age ; and fifty years more may make strange alteration in the church of the living God, and I am truly sorry to think that this deed should be its winding sheet, I was first taught the way of salvation among the poor methodists

methodists, which was one great reason why I always continued among them, another reason is, God has been pleased to water my soul with his heavenly grace thousands of times among them, which caused me to love them, and be exceeding partial towards them, no man ever pleaded much more for any sect than I did for the methodists, and the Rev. Mr. W-i--y in particular, and he has rewarded me as well for it. But if he is determined to sacrifice and "extinguish" methodism by the power of "That--that--I know not what to call---that diabolical"--"Deed of Darkness," I will weep over its declining state--and then proceed.

The above account is fairly contained in the "*substance*" of that deed which is fully fraught with injustice, oppression, and abuse. Please to take notice of these words, "*The Substance of the Deed*" you will meet with them again shortly.

When this deed made its appearance it made a great deal of talk and uneasiness among the preachers, and the people; to see that any man should set aside the old methodist plan which had long been public, and make another so contrary, which was dishonest to the last degree, so unjust in its measures; so abusive to many of the old faithful ministers of Christ, who had long laboured for their God and suffered many hardships for the sake of those whom Christ purchased with his blood, that London was almost in an uproar; one saying one thing and another another; but all agreeing in this, "That it was the worst thing that ever had been done since the methodists were a people." A printed copy of this deed was transmitted to each chosen member, but the other preachers were not worthy of much notice.

The universal cry of the people to an individual,
wherever

wherever I have travelled yet, was ; why did not the Rev. Mr. W-s-y suffer the old faithful preachers to be the members of this new conference ? if he was determined to contradict the old plan, and so unaccountably set one half of the preachers to govern the other half, with an arbitrary power, men of experience in the ways of God, who had travelled long as preachers, were fathers of families, and husbands of some sickly timourous wives, ought to have constituted this new conference ; but to chuse out a number of young men who knew but little of hardships, having travelled no more than one, three, five, or seven years, to govern those who had travelled some twenty, and some thirty years, was as unaccountable as it was unjust and absurd ; nor did I hear one man, who dared to account for so strange a thing being done, by a man upon whom the eyes of the nation had long been fixed ; but I shall assay to account for it by and by.

By this time letters began to fly through the kingdom, something like hail-shot in the field of battle ; but the Rev. Mr. W-s-y flew to the Armenian Magazine, and there planting his heavy artillery seemed determined at one single cannonading to silence, or stop the mouths of all the preachers, and people, and nation ; the text is Rom. Chap. xi, 33. " O the depth of the riches, &c." From which text the author takes the opportunity to shew that in all ages of the christian church it had happened, that old preachers had lost their zeal for God, and love for souls, that they grew dead in their own souls, and dry, and useless to others, that God had raised up young men from time to time, to take the places of those old, dead, dry, useless preachers, or members of his church, &c. &c. Then in the latter part of the sermon he exhorts the old dry preach-

ers, to stir themselves up, and cry to God while there is hope, and then turning to the young preachers, exhorts them to take warning by others, lest God should cut them off also. Armenian Mag. for July and Aug. 1784.

Notwithstanding all the above is true, and much more may be said upon the subject, yet, when it is considered as it was designed, to be levelled at the poor old methodist preachers, it is one of the most unaccountable pieces that ever was wrote since the methodists were a people : but for a full account of that piece, I would refer the reader to those magazines above mentioned, and although that piece has passed without any material opposition, I will spend half an hour in bombarding it, and if I have any occasion to renew the attack in a future edition ; if the Lord spares me to fight for him, I will not leave one stone upon another. And first ; I want better proof than any that has been yet given, that those old preachers whose names are not in the deed are dry, and dead, their conversation dry and useless, and that it was on that account that ‘ God ’ left them out of the deed and suffered a company of untried young men to be their governors. I wonder how any man could ever think of publishing such a piece to the world. Now if they had been dead, and dry, and useless : I cannot see that it was right of the Rev. Mr. W-f-y to publish it in the magazines. But if they were not the only dry, dead, useless men in the connection, it was unfair, unchristian, not to say scandalous, to publish such an account of the old servants of the living God, after twenty or thirty years faithful labour in their master’s vineyard : had any other man done the like, the methodist preachers would have justly risen up as the heart of one man, being moved like the trees of the wood, they

would have shewn their indignation at such a piece, as highly dangerous to the Lord's work ; but being attacked in the public magazines by the Rev. Mr. W-f-y ; they were ashamed to defend themselves, so sat down under the slander.

Secondly, I want better proof than any that has been yet given, that those select hundred were of "God's" chusing. It is true the Lord sees not as poor short-sighted man sees ; if he had, he would never have chosen Mr. John F. a man who had twice failed in business, was over head and ears in debt when he was taken into the priest's office for a maintainance ; and as all his affairs were not then settled, it was told in the public conference, that when they come to be settled, he would not be able to pay seven shillings in the pound ; yet as he was nearly allied to some of the leading men in the conference, he was taken into the connection for bread ; he would rise at five o'clock and preach about holiness, and then visit two or three and sometimes more gin-shops before dinner ; I say if God had seen as I do, he would have sought the connection thro', and thro', but he would have found a man who had had a better character than John F. but as he is dead, and it was thought he "died in peace" I leave it.

That sermon in the magazines did not stop all the preachers mouths, for I. H. wrote a circular letter to the preachers, desiring the assistance of all those who chused to help him ; to have the old plan re-established, and some satisfactory proof given for its continuance, and four or five of the preachers laboured to support him at the conference in 1784, but the governors of the conference ordered the doors to be shut against those troublers of Israel, and notwithstanding the interposition of that good man Mr. Fle-r who was down upon his knees weeping

weeping and praying; I was told an hour at a time; they were kept out of the conference for several days, and when they were admitted, it was only to inform them, that the new deed should stand, and that the preachers whose names were in it, being the Rev. Mr. W-f-y's choice should stand also. Notwithstanding the deed itself is unreasonable and unjust, whoever contrived it, the chief thing which made the most talk was, the young preachers being set over the old ones, by a deed that gave them an unaccountable power, which they could exercise without ever asking their consent. The arguments produced in favour of the deed, are such as I cannot find one grain of reason in, but I will lay them down before the public, as they were produced; and has been repeated many a time since.

The Rev. Mr. W-f-y having been sick the preceding conference at Bristol, it was urged that it was necessary to hasten this deed, and that when it was done, it was necessary to fill up the places with names; and "there was no time." I would ask any man of common sense, how much more time he would require to write the names of fifty old men, than the names of fifty young men? "but the old preachers are almost worn out," and do you want to shorten their days with abuse? No, no: "but the young preachers will last longer." Strange logic! if I could talk no better sense than this, I would cease my public lectures: seeing the deed mentions that the vacancies occasioned by death or any other event, shall be filled up every conference before any other business can be done; again, "It was done to save expence:" the conference use to consist of about seventy or eighty members; and many times not so many, that deed has nominated a hundred "to save expence." I am quite astonished that sensible men

should talk such nonsense, but stop, here is a thunder-clap follows, "The circuits must not be left naked:" the same lame argument as before; that the conference consisted of seventy or eighty members, but that the circuits should not be left naked a hundred are appointed. O blessed deed! what provision thou has made for the circuits, but I will shew you some stronger reasons by and by, why the young men were chosen, and stands in the deed now they are chosen, only give me time.

There was a speech made at the conference in public as if every body had mistaken the deed. "The deed was never designed to make any difference between the preachers but that they should act as brethren." I wonder what it is that some men will not say to carry a scheme into execution, for it seems to me they will say any thing. Methinks the young men would smile to hear this speech, but they know what power the deed conveys to them, and they know as well how to use it as a bull his horns, a horse his heels, and a boar his tusks. At this conference also there was a paper drawn up in favour of the deed, but it met with general dislike. One said, he could not in conscience say that he approved of the deed, and as he knew it had grieved many of the old preachers, he did not chuse to sign any paper, that imported his approbation of it. But Mr. ---- stood up and cried, "You may walk out and forty more of you." I was sorry to hear of such a thing being done at an assembly of methodist preachers, for they were the men of whom I had the highest opinion: but this was the first conference holden by virtue of this new deed, and when the president with his secretary, and secretary's clerk were seated all in form, they made a fine appearance; they brought a bill into the house for the preachers
to

sign signifying their approbation of this new system, and them who could not in conscience sign it, might walk out and forty more of them. The Lord sitteth in the highest heavens and will rise up in behalf of his old servants in due time. The preceeding year I had travelled in the Bedford circuit with Mr P---, it was no secret in that country at that time, that he had many little misunderstandings among the people, not any thing capital as sin, but such as banished love, and raised prejudice in one another's minds; and all the comforts the poor old servants of God could get was, they hoped to be rid of him at the conference; but their little disputes still increasing, and sharp words passing between the contending parties, he said, "If I come again to this circuit the next year I will shew you the difference of it." Now Mr. P--- being one of the select hundred having power to assist in stationing his older brethren, he could also assist in stationing himself, so he got back to Bedford, to grieve the people afresh, and to shew *them* "the difference of it:" the consequence of his returning was uneasiness and mortification to himself, the people looked shy and much dissatisfied, so that *he* found "the difference of it." After four months mortification, finding such a change among the people, he bethought himself of a method to lay the blame upon me and my wife; and wrote me a letter, which excelled every thing that I ever saw before; but he was one of the chosen members of the new chancery conference, I was not, so he had a mind to shew *me* the "difference of it" also. Part of his letter runs thus,

"Stukely, Dec. 24, 1784."

"Brother Moorehouse. As you are frequently taking of drugs. I would advise you to take something for the disease of the tongue. St. James says, chap.

chap. -iii, 8, the tongue is an unruly evil full of deadly poison ; would it not be well then for you to take a counter poison ? it seems necessary this should be done without delay ; for if the deadly poison is permitted to operate without controul, who knows where it may end, what deadly effects may it produce, by this time you are exclaiming, what in the world is the matter with B---r P---d ! I'll tell you friend, on my return from conference, I observed a change in the countenances and behaviour of some of the people, not only in Bedford but in several other places." Mr. P--- had told the people if he returned, he would " shew *them* the difference of it," but it seems the people got the start of him, and shewed *him* the " difference of it." But he goes on, " I did not then know the cause, but afterwards I was informed by those who heard you first, that you had spoken several unbecoming and disrespectful things of Mr. W-f--y and his friends." This is a home thrust, the sword of the Lord and Gideon : I believe the Rev. Mr. W. to be a great and good man, but I am sorry that he has so many double-faced friends about him : he was the man for whom I had the greatest love in the world, but I think the " friends " that surround and flatter him, will bring him down to his grave without honour. But what was this introduced for ? was this the cause of the people at Bedford and other places " looking so shy ? " no ; " Secondly, that you and Mrs. Moorhouse had spoken several things slightly and slanderously of my wife and me."

I desire to tell the plain truth in a plain way, easy to be read, and as easy to be understood, otherwise I would ridicule this language, as it deserves to be ridiculed, it smells so strong of conference logic. Now this letter which is full of slander. and calumny

ny from top to bottom, does not mention one single thing particularly that either I or my wife had done or spoke amiss “Spoke slightly” what had we said? “Spoke unbecomingly” what had we said? “Spoke slanderously” what had we said? now this is the way that some preachers will blacken their absent brethren in a public conference, first one and then another, for hours together, untill the old preachers say they are ashamed to hear it. May the great God who raised again Christ Jesus from the dead, bare his arm and stop the scandal. But he goes on.

“You have no reason to speak evil of Mr. W---and his friends; for you have had more favours from them than ever you had from the hackney coachmen” I never had any favours to ask either of Mr. W---or any of his friends; I never sought any; but I have had more slander and abuse from Mr. P-d alone, than all the hackney coachmen in England; all that I sought for from Mr. W---and his friends was only common honesty, and I look upon it, a lasting blemish, that I have been denied. Again,

“If I had the opinion of them that you have; I would choose to live upon butter-milk and potatoes rather than stay among them for a peice of bread.” I am sorry that ever I had any reason to change my opinion, and am astonished at Mr. P-d’s upbraiding me with travelling for a peice of bread. Some people thinks all they say becomes them; but it would have been more becoming of Mr. P. to have laid his hand upon his mouth, and to have been silent.

When I came home to Bradford in Wiltshire I found my wife sick in bed, she told me that Mr. P. had sent us one of the dirtiest letters that ever she saw in all her life, I thought she was delirious and
certainly

certainly raving as Mr. P. and I had travelled the preceeding year pretty peaceably. When she saw that I took no notice of her, she said the letter lies in the cupboard, but I could not believe her untill I saw it with my own eyes. Now can any man tell what induced that gentleman to write such trash four months after we had parted? he was made one of the members of this new chancery conference, and he knew I was not, he could go to the next conference, and he knew I could not, and if he could pick up any little thing that any prejudiced person would say against me, he could tell it in the public conference, and I a hundred miles off. So he could insult me and my wife with his filthy letters with impunity, he was safe, especially as Mr. W--- did not like me; from that time that I opposed him so much about his favourite Mr. D-- the broken farmer, but I shall not submit to the decision of Mr. P. about my evil slanderous tongue, or my wife's either; as I was a public person, I will appeal to them who knew me and my conversation in Bedford, and the adjacent counties. Altho when I consider myself in the presence of God, I see myself a poor unworthy, unprofitable servant. Not worthy the name of a minister of Christ. But when I consider myself among men, I do not know but I had as many friends there as Mr. P. had.

A few months after: I wrote that gentleman a letter, wherein I mentioned many particular things that had passed while we travelled together, and told him; I thought he might have been quiet; as he had little reason to complain. This procured me a second epistle from that honourable member of conference which begins thus,

“ I received yours---in which that spirit of pride and self-sufficiency which is observable in all your conduct

conduct very visible appears." Now if any body say that any part of my pamphlet is sharp, or keen language, where do you think I learnt it? it is possible if I had never been acquainted with great men, my language might have run in the plain yorkshire dialect; but by travelling with such gentlemen, it is not to be wondered at, if I learnt a little of their language. This letter is long, and full of such like dirty, scurilious language, but the Armenian Magazine informs us that he is one of "God's" choice, to assist in governing them (it seems) who have more decency and good manners. Armenian Mag. July 1784.

But he knew I was no favourite, and if I complained to the conference by letter, it would be snuffed at, and he could go again, and tell any little dirty thing he could glean up; he knew the conference would be opened with "Has any body aught against any of the preachers? if they have; now is the time to speak." If the chancery deed inspires its members with such religion in one year, what will it do in ten?

Notwithstanding the members of this new chancery conference shut the doors against those who opposed their measures at Leeds, 1784, and carried on their scheme; this year was a year of general uneasiness, wherever I travelled, and from what I could hear from other circuits. Some old preachers whom I knew, sat down and wept over and over, saying; Mr. W. has rewarded me very poorly for my many years service, as well as my old brethren; that now we must be governed by young men in the most arbitrary manner, and must submit to all their appointments or else go home, and we cannot do hard work; so we may go to our parishes with our wives and families.

H

While

While these things were fermenting up and down in the nation ; I was told Mr. O-y drew up a remonstrance in favour of the old preachers ; which was presented to the honourable members of conference at London, in 1785 ; this remonstrance met with as much contempt from the honourable *house*, as the old preachers had met with the preceeding conference at Leeds, for the chosen members of the chancery doed flew to that mishapen brat, and seemed determined to give it a thorough licking ; and try if they could not make its ugly face a little more agreeable in publick company. After they had licked and flabbered it over a considerable time, though in reallity they did not lick out one ugly feature of its face ; nor so much as make its lips cover its horrid grining teeth that threatens to destroy every man who shall oppose its princely reign ; yet they made it grin some horrid smiles ; then rising from their seats, proclaimed, “ We whose names are underwritten, do declare that Mr. Wesley was desired at the last Bristol conference, without a dissenting voice, to draw up a deed which should give a legal specification of the phrase “ The conference of the people called Methodists ;” and that the mode of doing it was entirely left to his judgment and discretion.”

“ And we do also declare, that we do approve of the substance and design of the deed which Mr. Wesley has accordingly executed and enrolled.”

The above declaration was signed by thirty-nine preachers, among whom are enrolled S. D. the broken farmer, and T. W. the swaggering tradesman, who wormed themselves into the priests office for bread for themselves and families. Then follows,

“ London, July 30, 1785.”

“ We whose names are are underwritten, but
who

who were not present at the last Bristol conference, do declare our approbation of the substance and design of the deed which Mr. Wesley has lately executed and enrolled for the purpose of giving a legal specification of the phrase "The conference of the people called methodists."

This declaration was signed by thirty preachers some of whom were hard to be persuaded, but they were persuaded, and that was enough. So the whole number who declared their approbation of the deed amounted to sixty-nine, and the two declarations with the proper names of the preachers distinctly ranged in order, under each declaration were entered in the journals of the house, and then published in the *Armenian Magazine* for 1785, page 549 and spread throughout the three kingdoms.

I will undertake to prove that there never was so lame a piece of logic printed by any company of methodist-preachers since they were a people, and yet this miserable trash came from the conference in print, riding in state upon the swift *Arminian Magazine*, to tell the people what things "We whose names are undermined" have done. Observe, about sixty out of the sixty nine were the chosen members of the deed, and there are many of those preachers whom I love and esteem for their works sake; and as a preacher I am not worthy to stand before them, but there were more than ninety-nine reasons why sixty-nine preachers signed such nonsense.

But first, at the best the above is like an excellent plaster laid beside a sore place; for though I know but little of my Grammar, and much less of a classical education, yet I can distinguish between a deed, and the names of the persons who are chosen the executors of that deed. I did not hear that the

"mode" was the thing that was disputed so much by far, as whether the young preachers were fit to govern the old ones ; and the old preachers thought themselves ill-used that the names of a number of unexperienced young men should be inserted, as the executors of that deed, and they compelled to be their servants, or "go home :" and they think so yet. But "We whose names are underwritten," shew upon a different subject, the "mode" or "substance" of the deed, (which I will prove to be what God hates,) but the real grievance was passed over in dead silence.

To illustrate this : suppose a man has fallen among thieves, and has received many wounds in his head that are dangerous, he sends for a Physician and tells him of his wounds, pointing to his bleeding head ; the Physician with abundance of polite cut and shuffle, puts a long roller tight round his arm, and leaves him. The poor man calls in 60 gentlemen of the faculty, and again shews them his wounds, and what the physician has done. They see plainly where the wounds are, but do not chuse to touch them. They feel his pulse, they search his arm, then try the tightness of the roller, and declaring their approbation of what the great physician has done : they leave him weeping, groaning, and bleeding. Now if they should cure this man's wounded head with a tight roller about his arm, it ought to be published in those magazines which fly the swiftest, and spread the farthest, to prove the truth of this.

Mr. --- who is one of the members of conference, and one of "We whose names are underwritten," told me in the most serious manner, that he saw plain enough the declaration of conference entirely missed the thing complained of, and that was the very reason why he let his hand to it.

The

The thing that wanted proving was this. Was the Rev. Mr. Wesley desired to draw up a deed to regulate the conference by certain laws, and restrictions; and to choose as many, or as few as he should think fit. And likewise choose out *who* should be the governors, and confine all the other preachers to be their servants? was this the desire of conference "Without dissenting voice?" if not; what is all this empty pomp and sham parade about? I acknowledge I was sorry when I saw such unparelled nonsense in the magazines, graced with the names of sixty-nine methodist preachers. But,

I think the above declaration ought to have introduced with the following solid truths.

The Rev. Mr. W--- has lately executed a deed, which is enrolled in his Majesty's high court of chancery, that has made us whole and sole trustees, to the use and enjoyment of all the preaching houses, dwelling houses, and furniture thereunto belonging, which have been, or shall be settled upon the conference plan; and also impowers us or forty of us, nay; a majority of forty of us to do all the business of the whole conference, and all the other preachers are given to us for servants, we are their lords, we have more power over them, than any man has over his parish apprentice; for tho his apprentice be disobedient again, and again; he must keep him, feed and cloath him in sickness or in health. But we have power to "expell and put out" "for *any cause* which to the conference may seem fit or necessary" and the man so expelled, shall be looked upon "as tho he was natural dead." And he may seek his bread where he can find it, we have power to fill his place with another.

Likewise we have power to station ourselves in the best of circuits, so far as we can, where a servant

want is kept to wait upon our wives, and then forty of us can station the rest of the preachers to fill up the remaining circuits, tho' many of them are much older than we, and have travelled twice as long, they must abide by our decision or "Go home." Again, forty of us has an uncontrollable power over the public stock, as the yearly collection, the kingswood collection &c. whose sons shall be admitted into Kingswood school, and whose shall not. Likewise forty of us has an uncontrollable power over the preachers fund, to give what we please to an old worn out preacher, to a widow, and widows who have children, we can give them more or less, or nothing, as a majority of forty of us thinks it necessary; and we can keep as many preachers from the conference as we please, for whatsoever is done by forty of us assembled for that purpose" Shall be had, taken, and be the act of the whole conference to all intents, purposes, and constructions whatsoever" chan deed. article second.

Then it would have followed as easy as water flowing down from the mountains, and all the world would have believed the chosen members were in earnest, when they cried out, "And we whose names are underwritten,"---"Declare that we do approve of the substance and design of the deed." O wondrous deed! O astonishing deed! Nay; an alarming deed! the mother of confusion, and one of the seven abominations of the earth which the Lord hateth, it "Soweth discord among brethren." Prov. chap. vi, 20.

Now I will shew that, "the substance" of that deed is entirely out of character. Notwithstanding it has the approbation of sixty-nine preachers, altho' I tell the truth with sorrow, grief and shame.

First, a great number of the methodist preachers
left

left their business, whereby they could have supported themselves, and if they had thought proper to marry, a wife and family with ease and pleasure; they put themselves entirely under the power of Mr. W. and the then conference, without the least reserve, in the greatest confidence of friendship; they had no more fear of being ill used by the Rev. Mr. W. or any of the leading men in connection, than of being murdered, much less to be abused, and unjustly treated. In this itinerant way of life they continued labouring in the Lord's work, some twenty, and some thirty, or near forty years, untill they had broke their constitution, got wives and families, and lay entirely at the good option of the Rev. Mr. W. and the heads of the conference, they had no claim for one morsel of bread, all the hope they had was, that the methodist preachers would continue following the old plan, in preaching, and carrying on the same system as usual in all their domestic affairs. But to their astonishment, there was a deed made which sold them for bondsmen to a number of untried young men, who knew but little of hardships, without ever asking their consent; and they are told, that they must submit to all and, every act that is done by forty of those men, whose names are mentioned in the deed, there is no remedy. Poor old soldiers of Jesus Christ, I am sorry for you; to think you should be sold at the market of pride and ambition, when you cannot help yourselves: and your wives and children are left to the option of those who have been running upon the nose, hunting for power with as much diligence as ever Nimrod did. The above is such an unaccountable breach of friendship, such an abuse of that power which was lodged in some great men whose names I forbear to mention, that if Gabriel had told me

me seven years ago, that these things would have come to pass, I could not have believed him, and I am so concerned to think that these things have been done among the methodist preachers, that I will drop it for the present ; only I shall remark that tho' sixty-nine preachers published their approbation of it, I am ashamed of it. And I think it was a shame for many of them who signed it ; but some are to be pitied.

Secondly, "the substance" of the deed is unjust ; the laws of our nation does not suffer a man to bind his servant apprentice to any body, without his consent. But, if a young man should say to a neighbouring gentleman, "Sir, I love you and your connections, and if you will permit me to live in your family I will serve you all the days of my life, and I will ask no more than a little food and raiment." If the gentleman accepts of this young man, and after thirty or forty years faithful service, he goes and binds him an apprentice to some other, without once asking his consent, would not the laws of our nation interfere ? would not the poor old servant sit down and weep ; saying, my master has rewarded me very poorly, for my long and faithful service wherewith I have served him, to bind me apprentice to another in my old age, and I must serve that man or go to my parish ; I did not think my master would have used me so. But his master's valet de cham tells him, "There is no remedy but patience." What would the world say of such a man and his religion ? if he was a calvinist, I know what the methodist would say in a moment ; only they would be at a loss for words, to set forth the nature of this gentleman's diabolical perfidy : but here I'll drop my pen. "The substance" of the deed is
also

also oppressive and abusive, and little for the honour of those who act by its authority.

The next thing that I shall take notice of is, the "design of the deed." But this is more complex and difficult to unfold, however I can unfold one grand design, which was this.

It was designed that the Rev. Mr. W. should meet with less opposition at the public conferences than he had met with at some of the preceeding ones: he met with abundance of opposition at Leeds conference in 1778, about T. W. a swaggering tradesman; who cut and shuffled till he could live no longer upon credit, and he did not seem to love working; so he was cramed into the priest's office for a piece of bread, to be maintained by those who were forced to work both for themselves and families; and much more at London conference in 1779, about S. D. the broken farmer; and twice as much at Bristol conference in 1780, about the same broken farmer again, and many deep wounds in the field of battle at Leeds in 1781, about something that had been done a little before that conference.

But it would puzzle the finest logician in the world, to know how this should be the case, that he should act with a more uncontrollable power; seeing the deed mentions the names of a hundred men, who "On the day of the date hereof, constitute the *members of the said conference*, according to the true intent and meaning of the said several gifts and conveyances, wherein the words *conference of the people called methodists* are mentioned and contained." Chan. Deed, page 3. But first the select hundred are of the Rev. Mr. W's chusing, and he has made them lords and rulers over the other preachers, together with all the priviledges, uses, and enjoyments of the preaching houses, dwelling houses, and fur-

niture thereto belonging, will they not "let him have his own way?" but there is a clause in the deed which mentions that the "conference shall and may dispense with, or consent to the absence of any member from any of the said yearly assemblies for *any cause* which the conference may see fit or necessary."

So if a broken farmer, or an idle tradesman is a favourite of some leading man in the conference, and wants to be a travelling preacher for a morsel of bread; he is pretty sure of a comfortable maintenance: for who durst oppose? Will that young man who is made ruler over many things by virtue of the deed? and may be turned out for "*any cause*?" no; his answer is polite, "Sir, I submit it to your better judgment." And if an old preacher be present who is a member, who has travelled thirty years or more; has broke his constitution, has a wife and family; but he cannot work at hard labour; neither does God require him: but if he stands up to oppose, he may meet with such a fire-ball, as I was told was thrown at Mr. B--n in the public conference at Leeds, 1784; "You may walk out and forty more of you."

But if a number of preachers stand up and oppose with as much spirit as they did at Bristol in 1780; when they declared, they thought the president would bring a reproach upon the methodist preachers, and the cause of God; by taking such broken farmers, and idle tradesman into the connection; that it was a shame to burden societies with such like men, &c. &c. I say, if a majority oppose the measure, let it be upon what subject it will, the president observes who are his enemies: and he may politely obtain ten or twelve dispensations for his opposers; and send for ten or twelve preachers
against

against the next conference, who have no vote; and then propose his favourite scheme, which will probably be carried upon the first motion; if not, ten or twelve more dispensations may bring it to pass. Another touch of conference logic.

But there was something more unchristian still, a little before the conference at London, 1785 there were circular letters wrote by Mr. W--y's order and executed by H. M. and sent to the preachers who were to constitute the then conference; informing them that "After this time, no preacher will be permitted to be present at any conference, only those whom Mr. W. writes for by name." I heard of many; one I saw, and I do not say that the above is word for word, but it is nearly. So here is a confirmation of what had often been cast in my teeth, "he is determined to have his own way." So it seems; but if the Rev. Mr. W--y is determined to drive on, and bear down all before him with unchristian practice, slander and abuse, by whole-sale; he may depend upon it, it will not be for his honour.

Now where must an old preacher seek for any redress of grievances? read forward and I will tell you. About this time, I was talking with C. W. and I observed there were many things done at the conference that were not fit to be done, and that I had a good mind to bear my public testimony against the deed, and some other things if they were not mended. But the good man cried, "drop it, drop it; do you not know it is treason to speak against Mr. W--y? Let him alone; you cannot turn him; he will have his own way, he is old, he is old; you'll hurt the work." What sort of a work do you think it is, that is so much afraid of the

truth being laid too close, lest it should hurt it? can this work be of God?

Now I say let the design be what it would beside; this was one grand design: that the Rev. Mr. W--y should govern in an absolute manner, load a society with an idle tradesman, or a broken farmer and a family; to insult a preacher that opposes him in any of his measures, and drive him about from place to place, and encourage all his flatterers to insult him wherever they meet him; and turn him out of the connection without a hearing; publish it in the magazines that he "desisted," and degrade him all over the nation, and threaten him with "law" if he complained in a public manner; this is Mr. W's practice; but more hereafter: and sixty-nine preachers declare their approbation of this design! At Bristol conference, 1786, the deed of chancery was again considered, but nothing could be done more to that mishapen brat; it had been so well licked over and dressed up the preceeding year at London, only it wanted a name; so it was baptized and called the "Deed Poll," and it's name printed in the minutes: so now I know what to call it. But what a lame tale was that published in the Magazine; that "We whose names are underwritten," told the world, they approved of the deed; without telling the public one single article it contained. I "declare" it is a fine thing to be a logician.

I could say something more about this deep, dark, long-saught, and far-fetched "Design" but I will see some of the strong arguments with which it is defended. It seems a lame affair from first to last, and all the arguments that ever I have heard, are as far from any thing solid; as the deed itself is void of justice. Such as; "The houses would have fallen into the hands of the trustees" what except the
young

young preachers had governed the old ones, by virtue of a deed containing fifteen heads, and twice as many horns, to push poor old methodism to death ?

“Let him alone, he will have his own way” and he has a company about him that does not care who sinks, if they do but swim. So long as they get pretty good circuits, and a little of the conference money to carry the wife in a coach to that good circuit, where the society can keep a servant to wait upon the mistress ; he may have his own way for such as them, he may insult who he will, they will help him ; he may drive a poor old preacher about and abuse him ; they will help him, he may drive one out of the connection, after a number of years travelling ; they will help him. When he has forbid a preacher to preach any more in any of the societies, then publish it in the magazines that they “desisted” they will give their vote, and help him to slander the preacher, all up and down the nation. It is such like men as these who have brought down methodism to the verge of the grave. Again, “He is determined to mortify every man who opposes his plan” I believe this is as solid, tho’ as unchristian a reason as any that has been given. Nay ; *the magazine for July and August, 1784, tells us that the old preachers were dead, and dry, and useless, and God had chosen the young preachers to carry on his work.* Will “We whose names are underwritten” undertake to defend that shameful piece ; but here is a fine reason in the magazine for 1785, page 269, why the other old preachers had not their names in the deed, instead of the young ones, which might easily have been done “True ; if I had thought as well of them as they did of themselves, but I did not” what is the next “Drop it, drop it” tell it not in Gath, publish it not in Askelon ; my Soul is pressed under

under a heavy load, to see that I am either sunk into an idiot : or the mighty are fallen. "You will do no good" I know not that, for I think these are lame arguments. And I write with much prayer, and many tears. I know God is with me, I find I do love him, and I will speak good of his wonderful, gracious, glorious name. He has not left me upon the top of a bare, and craggy rock, nor in a dry and barren wilderness, wherein is no water. Therefore I will trust and not be afraid, and let what will come of me; I will speak for God, and for his old servants, the preachers of Christ's gospel; and if I am brought to prison, or banishment,

I will sing of Jesu's merit,
 Tell the world of his great name :
 That if any wants his spirit,
 He is still the very same :
 He that asketh, he receiveth ;
 He that seeks is sure to find :
 Come for whosoever believeth,
 He will never cast behind.

But who can tell ; the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind. He may make use of my weak attempt to stop the growth of partiality, and oppression. He may raise up some more able hands to maintain the truth as it is in Jesus ; and keep pure religion alive, and in a flourishing state, in spite of all opposition. The Lord's will be done. I will write, and leave the whole affair entirely to him.

In 1785 as C. W. with whom I then travelled was preparing for the conference, I desired him to remember that I must not be appointed to any circuit near the sea-side, I was so subject to the ague if ever I came under the power of the sea-air. I told him

him I should not be troublesome to conference, only that must be remembered ; for sea-side circuits, and the ague had broke my constitution, so that I could bear no more. And as I never had the ague when I was in an inland circuit since I came from Ireland; I thought it my duty to guard against that racking disorder. As a proof of the above. When I was in Ireland I travelled in one circuit that I was four weeks in the mountains, and two by the sea side; I had the ague every time I went to the sea, almost every day for the whole year. I then travelled in the North of England, where one half of the circuit lay along the sea-coast; I scarce had one day's health while I travelled in that part. From thence to Newcastle upon Tyne; where I travelled and preached scores of times, when I could scarce raise my head from my pillow. From thence into an inland circuit, where I had not three fits of the ague, that I remember the whole year. From thence into Somersetshire, by the sea-side below Bristol: here I had the ague again the first day I went, and every day that I was there, in a most terrible manner. Mr. W--y going down into Cornwall, I applied to him for a change; telling him I could not live by the sea-side, however there could be no circuit found for me only along that healthy sea-coast in Glamorganshire in Wales, for peace sake I submitted to go; and had the ague almost every day, and sometimes twice a day for weeks together. So I informed Mr. W--y by letter, that if I could not have a circuit in all England to travel in, only by the sea-side; I might drop it; for God never called me to sacrifice myself in that manner. I then went into Wiltshire, and lost the ague that day I left the sea-side; and had no more of it, except an odd fit for years. So I thought I had sufficient reason to guard

guard against the sea-side : and Mr. W. promised me I should not be tried with it any more.

There never were so many of my friends in any circuit before this, who desired me to let them petition Mr. W-f-y for my stay a second year. But I did not suffer them, and I am glad I did not ; for if all my friends in the circuit had petitioned for my stay, they had all been denied, consequently grieved ; for Mr. W---n had a scheme on foot : he had paid his addressee to a woman of property, and very nearly allied to S. D. the broken farmer ; but he had not been crowned with success ; but having contrived to take the broken farmer with his wife and family, to B--d--d preaching house, where he settled himself a second year ; then making a second attempt he carried off the prize. I wish them all the blessings of a kind providence, and all the happiness the conjugal state can crown them with, but his head was so full of contrivance about this marriage affair, that it seemed he forgot all I had said about the sea-side ; it was nothing to him, whether I sunk or swam. So we were appointed for Devonshire.

When word came from the conference for me to go down into Devonshire, I told my wife we would go and see the country, and if it was by the sea-side I had no call from God to sacrifice myself there ; but Mr. W-f-y would be going down into Cornwall in about three weeks time ; and I would put him in mind of his promise, which he might have forgot in the hurry of business “ That I never should be tried with the sea side more.” Accordingly we prepared for our journey. But when we came to Columpton, tho’ we found a loving people, there was no house for my wife to put her head in ; this was no trial to us, we believed we should get a furnished

furnished room or lodging, or something, though the people told us over and over, they thought we could not get a room for any money. But the most of the circuit lay by the sea side, so I told the people they had no occasion to provide a house for me.

My wife travelled along with me in the circuit about eight days, untill Mr. W-f-y came down into the country, and we met him at Columpton, to lay our case before him. But here the widow gentlewoman met us also, who had a claim as she thought upon S. D. the broken farmer for a considerable sum of money, this is the broken farmer I mentioned before.

The gentlewoman was married a second time, and her husband was present; likewise a little daughter which she had by her first husband, and a house full of company; among whom were six or seven Methodist preachers. The gentlewoman wanted her money, and declared if it was not paid peaceably, she should be obliged to take some other course. But Mr. G. W--d who then travelled along with Mr. W-f-y maintained before all the company, that she never could get one single farthing, and produced the forementioned receipt.

"I acknowledge the receiving of three notes amounting to ninety pounds in part of payment for a hundred-and-seventy pounds, and which I acknowledge for the whole, untill D-y is able to pay the rest. 1779."

Mr. G. W--d waved this receipt over the heads of the people, to shew the Justice of S. D's cause, and the unjustness of the gentlewoman who came there to ask for her money. He then gave me the receipt to read, that I might convince myself of the truth of his assertions. As I have not the receipt by me, I do not undertake to say the above is word for

word, but I have not forgot the substance. Things stood thus in 1785, but I do not say all that I might say.

When I laid my case before Mr. W-f-y he made no objection to my changing with some preacher; and I and my wife to go to another circuit; more proper for my health. I need not take up my time in repeating all that passed in public company, for more than half an hour together.

But the Rev. Mr. W-f-y said, "There is no place here for sister Moorhouse to live in, Billy M-lls must write to Samuel E-w--ds by the next post; and tell him this is a particular case; brother Moorhouse is forever harrassed with the ague by the sea-side, and he must change with him immediately." I desired Mr. M-lls to mention it in his letter to the stewards at Borflom, where Mr. E-w--ds then was; that I had my wife with me, and should be glad if a place could be provided for her to live in: and he very kindly promised me he would. This conversation lasted for half an hour in public company; so that I and my wife could not be imposed upon, except we had been ideots: and by virtue of that appointment, we set off for Borflom that afternoon; tully expecting Mr. M-ll's letter being at Borflom long before us. But when we had parted, Mr. W-f-y altered his mind, and a letter was wrote by a young man who was then in the company, and wrong directed, as if it had been done on purpose. So there was no letter wrote to Borflom: but I and my wife kept on our journey.

When we got to Borflom, the people had not heard one word about us, but when I told them how it was, and the reason of our going there, they believed me: and Mr. B. said, "I desire that you and Mrs. Moorhouse will make yourselves content, we believe

believe there has been some mistake, or some letter has miscarried, but you shall be welcome at my house, untill this mistake shall be cleared up." Here we met with T.W. that swaggering tradesman who wormed himself into the priest's office, for a morcel of bread, as I have mentioned in a former page. My wife and I spent about a week among a loving people, who did not know that Mr. W---y did "not like me," untill that gentleman came home, but then their eyes were opened.

The day T. W. came home, we were a few of us invited about half a mile out of the town to drink tea. Mrs. W. had her reasons for not going ; Mr. W. had his reasons for looking upon me and my wife as if we had stunk under his nose, and all the way we walked together, he looked like a bum-bailiff leading away two poor delinquents to some prison ; he never spoke one word to either of us all the way. At this time we had not spoken one word concerning T. W. to any man or woman in that country, concerning his manner of getting into the connection ; but he knew very well, that I and my wife both could tell, more than he wished to here, and if we had stayed at Borslom, he and his wife could not have set up for thoro'-bred gentlefolks ; and this might offend him.

On our return home, he walked on before the company with Mr. F. ; and my wife broke out into a fit of crying, which is not her natural disposition to cry at insult : but here she could refrain no longer, to see herself treated with such contempt, by a man who cramed himself into the priests office for bread ; notwithstanding many of the old preachers declared in public at Leeds's conference, that he was not worthy to be admitted among the preachers of the gospel. But he is a great favourite, and one of

of the select hundred, to assist in conference matters, and stands enrolled among "We whose names are under written," in the magazine for 1785, page 550; what an assistant to Mr. W-y to insult them he "does not like;" and what an ornament to the methodist preachers; no wonder that his wife must have a comfortable house neatly furnished, where the society can keep a maid to follow the mistress with her great coat and umbrella, in case it should rain when she is on a visit.

But Mrs. W. observed in public company, that it was "owing to the negligence of the assistants, that there were not houses furnished in every circuit for the preachers wives." If all the methodists had the good fortune of here and there an individual, they might furnish the preacher's houses with mahogany, but they are commonly a poor, plain, hard working people, that have little to spare, except they should run into debt, and that would be no credit to religion.

When we got back to Mr. B's, we were talking about our long uncertain journey, and wondering what would be the issue. Mr. W--k said, "Sir, if it suits you and Mrs. Morehouse you may go home, I understand there is a young man in Gloucestershire that can supply your place." I told him we could make it suit us; for we had a house ready to go to, and when I came into the connection, I left no old debts. So here was dead silence; no man spake a word for some time. A little after, Mr. T. W. called me out into the garden, to ask me what I meant by saying "I left no old debts." I easily told him what I meant, and who I meant, but he cried out, "Mr. W--y asked me to travel; I owe no man in the world a single shilling; and I never had so much money in all my life as I have at this present."

present." I asked him if all the old preachers were mistaken, who declared he was not worthy to be admitted among the preachers of the gospel, and if such and such things were all lies, that had been reported at such, and such places. When he found that I knew more than he thought I did, he turned it off saying; "It signifies nothing you and I differing." So we directly went into the preaching house to hear Mr. F. preach; and immediately after preaching, Mr. W--k called a meeting of the stewards and leaders, and took care to make me look little in their sight, and laid down a shocking catalogue of mischiefs, that would inevitably follow, if I stayed in that circuit; that there would be nothing but confusion, and disturbance, that I had taken away his character, and he did not chuse to travel with me, and desired the stewards to stir up themselves, to drive me away.

The next morning a serious gentleman came and called me out of the house, desiring to speak with me: so when we got out, he said; "Sir, I am come to speak to you for your good. Mr. W--k says you have injured his character, and he is not willing to travel with you. We have had a meeting about it; we know not what to do in this affair, for we desire peace. And if Mr. R--n had come to you this morning, I do assure you he would have told you a different tale, in a different spirit; but the people pitched upon me to come and speak to you upon this subject, and I desire you for your own good to go away." The good man told me this tale with such consternation and pathos, as if their had been a mob gathering together, to drive me and my poor wife out of the town. Did not Mr. T. W--k play his cards well? I think he managed his point as well as ever he did at any place, either in

Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, or at the Leeds conference, when he got into the priest's office for bread, to "travel as a single man;" and then he got his son into Kingswood school, and next his wife to be a gentlewoman: but he was one of the members of the "Deed Poll," and one of "We whose names are here under written," and he knew I was out of favour. So he could sit down and smoke five or six pipes of tobacco a day, and it is not good for a man's health to smoke too many dry pipes; and then preach about holiness and perfection. Pray God be gracious to our souls, that we perish not.

I have had many sorrowful days in my life, among the methodist preachers, and that Sabbath was one. But being appointed to preach at a neighbouring village, I took my wife behind me, and on our little journey, we had an opportunity of pouring out our souls unto God, who seeth in secret, and he watered us abundantly with his heavenly grace, but still we had our feelings, for certainly nobody was ever so insulted by a methodist preacher in the world, or by an idle swaggering tradesman either, as we were by Mr. T. W--k. About this time came Mr. B.'s letter, which had been near a month on its journey. It was to inform me, that Mr. W--y had altered his mind, and that I was to stop in Gloucestershire. So the next morning being monday morning; I and my wife prepared for the Gloucestershire circuit, but the stewards did not forget to enquire after Mr. W--k's character. I told them as I had not said any thing to any of them, I should leave them as I found them. Being driven away from Borslome in such a hurry, I had not received Mr. W--y's letter in answer to one which I had wrote about six days before our departure. So I desired them if a letter should

should come for me, to forward it after me to Worcester. According to my expectation, a few days after we had left Borstom, Mr. W--y's letter came to hand, and the people at Borstom had the assurance to break it open in order to see the contents. And Mr. W--y observes "I ordered you to Devonshire and no where else" this is not true. But as he wanted to drive me out of the connection it was the less matter. But I say Mr. W--y sent me to Borstom, and it was settled in public company at Columpton. Again, "And there you might have stayed" I could not, Because of the sea air which universally gives me the ague "I permitted, but never ordered you" a fine logical turn, but I did not ask to go to Borstom no more than I asked to go to Paris, how then did the Rev. Mr. W--y give me a permit? I was positively sent to Borstom. But what must my friends at Borstom think when this letter was broke open among them? and they found I went thither without orders? they would naturally think that Mr. W--k's account of me was true, that I was in disgrace, that I was travelling from place to place to get myself into any circuit for a peice of bread, and that Mr. W--y wanted to have me out of the connection. And another close at the bottom of the letter would confirm the above conjectures "If B. E-w--ds is willing to to take the place of Ph-l--p H-d--tle, you may take his place," observe, *if* B. E-w--ds is willing. But if B. E-w--ds was not willing to go, there was no place mentioned where I should go to at all.

A gentleman who saw this ill-natured letter when it was written, and saw it was designed to block up my way, to grieve me afresh, and drive me out of the connection, said to Mr. W--y, "Sir, Mr. Moorhouse has travelled a long while, he has broke his constitution

constitution in the work, and I never heard any thing that was bad of him in all my life, his health is not good, and if you turn him out of the connection, what must he do?" But the Rev. Mr. W. replied, "If his health be bad, and if he cannot work, that is nothing to me what he is to do: he has wrote me a very impertinent letter." I will lay this down before them who will hear me. I took what money I had got together with my hand-labour, when I began to be a travelling preacher, I spent it all in the Lord's service; I had then travelled thirteen years, I had broke my constitution in that sphere of life, so that I could not work for my bread: I had been very ill used over and over, and I did not think it a sin against god to complain, but then I must be turned out of the connection for it, and if I cannot work for my bread, I may starve, or go to my parish in disgrace, what is that to the Rev. Mr. W--y. Well may Solomon observe, and with sorrow I repeat it, "As a roaring lion, and as a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people." Prov. xxviii. 15. May the Lord deliver me and my poor wife from their roaring, ranging power.

The eyes of the Lord run too and fro' through the whole earth. But how this dirty letter would raise Mr. W-k's spirits afresh; I had left him victor in full possession of the happy field at Borslen; and Mr. W--y's untrue letter crowned him as conqueror. Let Mr. W--y and T. W--k crown each the other some time longer.

Mr. R. seems to be a man of an uncommon spirit, and thinks all he does becomes him. So when that letter of mine from Mr. W--y was broke open, he wrote, "As Mr. W-y has left it to Mr. Edwards and us." One would think this gentleman
had

had been at some capital place for his education, and that he had perfectly learnt the logic of the day, for I cannot find any thing like that great word "US" in all the whole letter : well but, "Mr. E-w--ds is determined to stay, and we are determined to keep him."

J-hn R-b-nf-n.

Borflom, Sep. 17, 1785.

This letter was then sealed up and sent after me to Worcester.

When I had been at Borflom a few days, the stewards met together, and were about to send a petition to Mr. W--y to confirm my staying there, not that they had any thing against Mr. E. they thought him a good young man, but I and my wife had had so much riding about, it was time for us to settle somewhere. Mr. E-w--ds was very kind, and said he would change with me as soon as Mr. W--'s letter should come, appointing him where he should go ; but when Mr. W--k came home, he opened the eyes both of Mr. E. and the stewards ; so now it runs ; "Mr. E. is determined to stay, and we are determined to keep him."

If Mr. R--n had known the truth of the matter he might have saved his credit as well as his trouble in breaking my letter open ; for if I had not stayed at Worcester, I should have gone home as Mr. W-k had advised me ; and when I had printed and published my reasons for so doing, where would Mr. W--k have gone to ?

We just got to Worcester in time to prevent the sale of the household furniture which belonged to the circuit, and had been occupied by the other preacher's wife. Mr. H-ll had got to hear, that I and my wife, were tossed on the billows of uncertainty, and we were likely to come to an anchorage in Worcester, he wrote to me upon the subject, tho'

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he could not tell either where, or when, his letter would find me: the next day, or upon the day he wrote, he ordered a young man into the circuit to fill up the place; and likewise ordered the household furniture to be sold, and promised the stewards he would do all in his power, that they should never have a preacher's wife at Worcester so long as they lived. Observe, he is one of the members of the new "Deed Poll" conference, and one would naturally imagine he knew that Mr. W--y did "not like" me; and that he should have a reward for assisting to throw me out of the connection. However, when we got into the circuit, the young man relinquished his place, having been disappointed in getting a horse; but when we had got to Worcester, the stewards told us, they durst not let us make use of the furniture, untill Mr. H-ll should be acquainted, and give contrary orders; for they were to be sold, and the money was already condemned. After acquainting Mr. H-ll we were permitted to settle at Worcester, after a ride backward and forward of four hundred and eighty miles, in six weeks time, double horsed, often in the rain, and sometimes in the dust; and the Worcester circuit lies only thirty-four miles from the Bradford circuit, from whence we set out. The wheel of Providence is full of eyes, both within and without.

The people thought we had had a long, trying, expensive journey; untill Mr. H-ll told them it was along of ourselves; then pity ceased, and suspicion took place.

The D E F E N C E, &c.

P A R T II.

I SHALL now begin to tell what that crime was, for which I was so suddenly turned out of the connection, and so universally degraded.

I considered that the members of this new conference were Lords ; and I, with a number of my more honourable brethren, were become bond-servants to all their laws ; and however we were used, or abused, we had no way left us for any redress of grievances ; and however it might be with others ; I saw I could get no redress. I had told my case to several preachers to no good purpose ; I had wrote to the Rev. Mr. W--y over and over, and I had told *him* that if I was insulted much more, I did not chuse to bear it, I had long born slander and abuse ; I looked for a change, and there was a change for the worst, untill I and my wife must be the sport of any idle tradesman who could get into the priest's office for bread, if such like can but flatter Mr. W--y, they care for no man. I knew no man was to be permitted to be present at any conference, except he was wrote for by name. I was sensible I should not be sent for, I had behaved myself so ill at Bristol conference in 1780, in opposing Mr. W--y so much about taking the broken farmer with a wife and family, into the connection for bread ; and I did not see any occasion to be insulted

by one honourable member of this new conference, one year ; and then by another, another year, as I had been ; and yet after all the insult and abuse, that the Rev. Mr. W--y had powerd out upon me, and encouraged others to do so too, the love and regard that I had for him was so great, I was not willing the public should ever know how I had been used among the methodist preachers ; and again, the love I bore to the methodists, as a body of people, was so great, that I was not willing these things should ever come abroad by my hands ; so I thought of a new method, which was this.

I sat down and wrote a very long letter containing seven or eight sheets of paper ; laying down some of the ill usage I had met with from time to time ; the evil things that I had seen among some great men ; the unchristian manner in which the chancery deed, or the “ Deed Poll ” was drawn up, with some remarks on the lordly spirit of some of “ We whose names are underwritten ; ” and the usage my wife and I had met with at Borslom, from that capital member of the “ Deed Poll ” Mr. W--k : with a number of other articles, too tedious to mention here. And I settled it in my mind, that every travelling preacher should have one of these letters ; but to write them, seven or eight sheets of paper on both sides in very small writing, two hundred times over, would be almost endless. So I went down to Bristol in June 1786, and got this letter printed as private as I could ; and when this was done, I sealed up every letter, and directed them with my own hands. I likewise put every letter into different post-offices with my own hands, and I did not mention one word to any friend in the country. Nay, there were nine preachers in Ireland, to whom I could not direct my letters with any degree of certainty ;
and

and for fear they should miscarry, and fall into the hands of some stranger, I directed them to the care of Mr. R. who was then stationed in Dublin, thinking he would direct them properly ; but the good man returned them back again to me, charged with double postage. This was a bright thought, he discovered a fine genius ; and as he is one of the members of this new " Deed Poll " he may perform wonders one day or another.

These nine returned letters fell into the hands of J. H-ll (at Eversham in Worcestershire) another of the honourable members of the " Deed Poll " he broke one of them open, and a gentleman was dispatched (I believe by the stage-coach) to Worcester, to alarm my friends there, and to shew them what wickedness I had done. One of the preachers at Bristol got one, and a gentleman tradesman was dispatched by the coach to Gloucester, Worcester, and some other places in the circuit, to make a most horrid uproar, and to tell he knew not what. The same preacher came to Stroud in Gloucestershire to alarm my friends there, he made them believe I had-made it public, that my letter was sold all over Bristol ; and all that I could say to the contrary was of no use. One gentlewoman in particular, who had long professed a large measure of religion, was so alarmed that she could hear no reason, no more than a wild bull in a net. She stormed, and turned round upon the floor, and cried " O ! what have you done ? Mr. Moorhouse what have you done ? you have slandered the greatest man in the world, you have slandered the preachers : O ! what have you done ? " I answered, I have kept the whole as private as I could possibly keep it ; I have sent each travelling preacher a private letter, but I have exposed nobody, the subject was among the travelling

ling preachers, and I had mentioned it in my printed letter, that no preacher should divulge any thing that was mentioned in that piece : but she again turned round upon the floor, lifting up her hands to heaven, contradicting all I had said in the most positive manner, that any vulgar ploughman could do : and giving me the lie over and over, I walked out, she shut the door, and farewell.

Before this time I was as well respected at Stroud as I would wish to be by my friends in any place while I live. They had given me many pressing invitations to take my wife, that they might have an opportunity of shewing their love and respect to us both ; and this was the time that I had taken my wife, to experience their love and friendship ; but the door was shut. It seemed as if I and my wife were appointed for slander and abuse, and the Lord was about to try how much we could bear, and had it not been for his supporting grace, we had sunk under the oppressive weight long since. But blessed be his name, we are still in the land of the living, and our faces are Zion-wards, in spite of all opposition. Here I was told the preaching-house door would have been shut against me, but for fear of the dissenting congregations noticing it. If ever I come to Stroud while I live, I will ask leave of some of those dissenting ministers, to let me preach in some of their preaching houses ; I will recommend Christ Jesus as the Saviour of sinners, and a great one. Glory be to his name, he has been my God and Saviour, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Here I received a letter from Mr. B-d-n, one of the members of this new conference, nearly as follows.

“ When you was at Bristol you was not well ; I was sorry for you, but how was I shocked when I heard

you had been printing the most consummate nonsense that ever disgraced a press." Nay, I can mention a piece of more "consummate nonsense" than ever I was capable of writing: I mean that in the *Arminian Magazine* for 1785, page 549; which is introduced with "We whose names are under-written," and then graced off with the names of sixty-nine methodist preachers; and likewise that paragraph in the "*Journals of the house*" at Bristol conference, 1786, when you baptized the deed, and called it the "Deed Poll."

And another paragraph in the minutes, the production of the same conference; I think is rather worse than "*consummate nonsense*," which runs nearly thus, "Let no more preaching houses be built, nor collections made for that purpose, except the undertakers will give security that the house shall be settled upon the conference plan as soon as it is finished." As I have not a copy of those minutes by me, I do not say that the above is word for word, but it is the substance of that paragraph alluded to, and I think "*disgraced the press*." Now I would ask any man of common sense if he thinks Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord, ever hunted with more diligence to be a great man; than some of the leading members of this new conference are hunting for power, over all the preaching-houses, dwelling-houses, and all the preachers young and old; who are not mentioned in the "Deed Poll;" to be their servants? the desire of power has been the downfall of churches, states, and nations; what will you invent the next conference? to go to law with that man who shall dare to oppose, or expose any of your measures? But more of this by and by.

Twenty or thirty years ago, the methodist preachers

chers used to be begging money to build preaching houses ; telling the people what a glorious thing it was to give a little money to build a house for God ; it might be a means of saving many precious souls for whom Christ died : and doubtless, building houses for God may have the same blessed tendency still, to save many precious souls ; *if the undertakers will settle the houses upon the conference-plan, but if not, let no houses be built, no collections made, no souls saved upon that plan.* Lord Jesus shew thyself the sinner's friend. I am astonished ! I am even at my wits end, when I think of these things.

From Stroud, I and my wife came to Gloucester : but here our friends had been thrown into the utmost confusion, by a courier arrived with dispatches from Bristol by the stage coach a few days before us. They could stand their ground no longer ; but they had recourse to an excellent remedy ; it does my soul good when ever I think upon them. They appointed a day for fasting, and prayer, the day before I entered that ancient city ; and among the many petitions they put up to God for general blessings ; they put up some petitions for me, for they had heard that I was turned an apostate, and was laying waste the church of God, destroying the work of the Lord and sacrificing his servants. May God bless those people with the choicest of his blessings ; I will pray for them so long as I live, because they prayed for me in my distress. From thence we came to Worcester, here our friends had stood the shock with becoming fortitude, and patience, notwithstanding two couriers had arrived there by the stage-coaches with dispatches, one from Mr. B-d-n at Bristol, and the other from Mr. H-ll at Eversham, two honourable members of the conference : they answered, they

they had not seen any thing in my conduct contrary to religion ; and they should not begin to make an uproar for they knew not what ; so they heard me preach quietly, the most of them as usual.

But when we had been at Worcester a few days, there came a letter from Mr. H-ll to one of the stewards at whose house I and my wife had lodged, as follows.

“ Mr. Wesley informs me in a letter that Mr. Moorhouse is not to preach any more in any of our societies. I have wrote to Mr. Moorhouse and you, you will not have the letters I understand since, till Tuesday morning ; and as Moorhouse will be leaving Worcester on Tuesday morning, and going to Tewksbury, if not informed before of this affair ; as the steward you will see what I wish you to attend to in this wretched affair.”

Observe ; Mr. H-ll was to be at Worcester in his turn to preach on Saturday, and this letter came to hand on Monday ; but, you “ see what I wish you to attend to ;” drive Moorhouse and his wife out of the town before I come. He is a fit man to govern his older brethren, and to insult any preacher whom “ Mr. W--y does not like.”

The next day the two forementioned letters came to hand, wherein Mr. H-ll had contrived to send me out of the circuit as pennyless as possible ; this occasioned me to take my horse, and ride over to meet that gentleman, and settle matters in a different way. Here he gave me my nine returned letters, one of which he had broke open ; and for which I paid 16s. 6d. he lifted up his hands, spread his fingers ; and exclaimed, “ You have exposed yourself to the law ; your letter is a libel, and it does not signify whether it be false or true, you are ex-

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posed to the law." Is there no law for breaking letters open ?

I have travelled with preachers who have had twelve or fourteen shillings a quarter, paid by the steward of the circuit for *how-do-you-do* letters ; but mine contained something else beside *how-do-you-do*, so I paid for them myself.

The next day came a letter from Bristol, contrived I have no doubt by Mr.-----, one of the honourable members of the " Deed Poll," It runs thus. "Sir ; when you was in Bristol, you called at my house in the character of a methodist-preacher, I gave you a kind invitation to lodge at my house during the conference ; but as I find since, you have wrote vile flanders against our worthy aged minister John Wesley, and other worthy characters : this is to acquaint you that I shall not receive you, &c."

I think the same hand directed this letter, whose head contrived it : he is a man of fine abilities, he is capable of insulting any preacher whom "Mr. W. does not like" compleatly. Notwithstanding Mr. H-ll's charge to the steward, "you will see what I wish you to attend too." He let my wife stay quietly to wash up her linen, and then we left the place without further trouble, July, 1786. having recourse to our old method when we rode across the country from Borlom, about nine months before this time, heartily praying, and tenderly weeping for miles together, to see the downfall of religion among methodist preachers ; and the scandalous usage, I and my wife had met with from them. But blessed be the great God, we are on our journey home ; tho degraded by the methodist preachers. And when we shall see Jesus as he is, we will cast our crowns at his feet, and we shall forget our sorrowful feelings that we had when we left Worcester, for
God

God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes, and we will rejoice with our dear mistaken friends at Worcester, Gloucester, and Stroud ; with all them out of every nation who feared God, and by his grace wrought righteousness.

Some may say, *I would have gone to conference.* So I would, if I had had any favours to have asked ; and that good man, the Rev. Mr. Fl-tch-r, to have interceded for me with prayers and tears, upon his knees an hour at a time. But first, I had no favour to ask ; and secondly, the Rev. Mr. Fl-tch-r was gone to Abraham's bosom : so I had no business at the conference.

Again, the Rev. Mr. Wesley had sent word, that I should preach no more in any of his societies. And Mr. H-ll had wrote to the steward at Worcester, " you will see what I wish you to attend to in this wretched affair ;" drive Moorhouse and his wife out of Worcester before I come, which is five days hence. Again, my friend at Bristol, who had invited me to lodge at his house, was persuaded to write me word, " This is to acquaint you, that I shall not receive you." Now I will ask any man of common sense, what credit he thinks the methodist preachers gain, by telling that idle-headed tale, up and down the nation : "*Mr. Moorhouse should have gone to conference by all means.*" What lame logic.

By a majority of the conference, which was about three weeks after I was turned out, my name was published in the magazine, that I had, " desisted " and the preachers told the same tale up and down in the circuits, and blackened me as " one of the vilest wretches that ever was in the connection since methodism existed," and told it in the neighbourhood that I was a man that "ought not to be encouraged."

Equity once dwelt among the ancient heathens at Athens, but iniquity gained ground so fast ; and

encroached upon her dominions with such rapid tyranny; that she was obliged to fly, and leave the place to his shameless government. She fled from place to place, being so hotly pursued by her enemies (iniquity and political tyranny;) that she could never stay long at any one place. Last of all she sailed for England, and erected a noble temple called the court of *equity* or *conscience*. To this noble court many of the Britons flew for justice; but she being a foreigner, was obliged to have interpreters, who pretended to devote their lives to her service, but corrupted her laws for bribes, by their false interpretations. She seeing her enquiries after justice injured from time to time, one day called her interpreters to an account for it; who conspired against her, and gave her many grievous wounds upon a public court day; and doubtless would have slain her outright; had she not fled and escaped out of the country. (probably to the West Indies, or the back settlements of America,) but her interpreters keep their places, still proclaiming loudly, "*Equity dwells here*;" but it is false, she is banished, and little but the name left. Iniquity, Flattery, Policy, Observers of times, Men-pleasers, Tyrannical Oppression, and Abuse for the afflicted *dwells here*, and where equity now resides, I think it is hard to tell: but when I am in pursuit after her, I shall pass by some great mens doors, where I once thought she dwelt.

I had one friend in Leicestershire with whom the preachers had little or no connection at that time, consequently had not the opportunity of calumniating my character at that house; but as the Rev. Mr. W-f-y travelled across that country about the same time that I was "Expelled;" a young man who travelled with him went to my friends house
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on purpose to degrade me, and cried out, "The preachers will go to law with Mr. Moorhouse : and if he was here, I would prove him a liar to his face" not so fast D-k-y, you would do it much better when I was eighty miles off. It was amazing to hear the noise and uproar that was made about me among the methodists, who were set on by some of the preachers, being the consequence of my *private* letter, if it had been public, there would have been strange work no doubt, for one half of the people, and in some places, nine-tenths, neither knew what they heard, nor what they said, only they heard say "He has wrote against Mr. W--y," This was enough : it alarmed the people, they were like those who join in the cry "A mad dog, a mad dog ;" they did not give themselves time to think. Some may say that my letter was one of the most provoking pieces that ever was wrote, but I think there is a piece in the Arminian magazine for August 1786, page 456 much more provoking ; only the man to whom it was addressed was a man of much more patience than some of "We whose names are underwritten."

"Augustus Cæsar sitting in judgment, Macænas was present ; and perceiving that he was about to condemn several persons, endeavoured to get up near him ; but being hindered by the croud, he wrote in a schedule *Surge, carnesfax* ; "Rise, hangman" and threw the note into Cæsar's lap. Cæsar immediately arose, and came down without condemning any person to death : and so far was he from taking this reprehension ill, that he was much troubled he had given such cause for it." But, "We whose names are underwritten" profess a different religion than Augustus Cæsar, and so they ought, they have a different practice.

Now

Now what are the other preachers to expect who are bond-servants to the members of conference ? they may be driven hither, and thither, and if they complain of any unkind usage : they may be used worse ; and one may lord it over them one year, and another the next, and so on. And if they can but grieve any of the preachers, year after year, untill they dog them out of the connection, they reap a benefit by it ; as the preachers pay half a guinea a year into a fund, designed for the relief of preachers widows, and fatherless children ; together with the old worn out preachers, who continue in the connection. But if any man be turned out for immoral conduct, or desist from travelling ; he loses all those privileges : so if they can grieve an old preacher that has travelled ever so long and has a wife and children ; and can find any colour of pretence to turn him out of the connection ; then publish his name in the magazines, and tell the world he “ desisted ;” the conference reaps the following benefits

First, it thins the connection of preachers wives, and there is a house left for another preacher’s wife ; probably a broken farmer’s. (Will you call for proof ?) Secondly ; if the man has broke his constitution, and cannot work, what is that to the conference ? he may go to his parish. Thirdly ; if he die and leave a widow with any children, and they come to want, what is that to the conference ? her husband “ desisted ” they may go to their parish. Fourthly ; when he is driven out of the connection by unfair, not to say unchristian usage ; he leaves all the money that he has paid into the preachers fund ; and this strengthens it for the rising generation : nor do I speak by guess.

First ; when I went into the connection I had about twenty pounds, which I had saved with hard labour

labour : I let it all go in the Lord's work. Secondly ; when I was married, there was no provision for my wife : for peace's sake she lived upon potatoes and salt, milk and bread, and the like. When she died, I had not six-pence to help to bury her.

Thirdly ; there was a tradesman who could live no longer, except he would bend to work, taken into the connection about four months after the death of my wife ; who got his son to Kingwood school, and his wife to be maintained as a thorough gentlewoman, out of the subscriptions of poor, hard working people. Fourthly, the next conference a broken farmer was taken into the priest's office, and as he was a favourite, there was plenty of provision in the church for his wife and four, which increased to six, seven, or eight children ; some at Kingwood school, and some in the circuit where their father preached. Fifthly ; when I found fault with these things, I was insulted, which caused me to complain, and then I was insulted worse, and put to all the inconvenience the conference could well think of ; sending me and my wife from place to place, almost five hundred miles double horsed ; and blocking my way up both at Borslome, and Worcester, as I have shewn before ; and a law being made that no person should be permitted to be present at any conference, only such as were wrote for by the Rev. Mr. W--y by name, caused me in the Sixth place, to write a circular letter to all the travelling preachers, to let them know how I had been used ; this letter contained a number of disagreeable truths, which I charged the preachers to keep secret, and I kept it as secret as it could be kept with the doing of it at all ; I never shewed one letter to either friend or confidant, till after I was turned out of the connection.

Seventhly ;

Seventhly ; I was turned out of the connection after fourteen years service, as nearly penniless as Mr. H-ll could contrive ; and all the money that I had paid into the preachers fund for thirteen years, besides my twenty pounds, was entirely sunk and lost.

Eightly ; my name was then published in the Arminian magazine, and the public were told that I had “ desisted ” which I look upon a most scandalous slander ; not to say those who published it, knew it was a groundly falsehood.

Ninthly ; I was degraded all over the country where-ever I have travelled, or from what quarter I have had any intelligence ; as if the methodist preachers were determined I should starve to death : that nobody should employ me in any branch of business, whereby I might procure the necessaries of life, and if I set up in any kind of business, that nobody should trade with me, Mr. H---n told my neighbours, “ I was a man that ought not to be encouraged.”

Tenthly ; I am threatened, and menaced with that “ New sharp thrashing instrument having teeth ” the “ law,” in case I make any opposition to the practice of the new “ Deed Poll ” conference, or dare to tell the public how I have been abused by its honourable members. What a portrait of the Holy Inquisition ; and what reason I and my wife has to bless God that we are not under papish government ; if we were, I am sorry that I have any reason to say, or believe. that we should have been burned at a stake long since.

You have done me shame ; you have dealt unjustly with me ; you have abused, and slandered me, I did not expect such treatment from you, when I set out as a travelling preacher ; do you think it is
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for your credit ; or the honour of that doctrine that has long been preached among the methodists ? but what will you go to “ law ” with me for ? am I become your enemy because I tell you the truth ? there are many preachers who know that it is truth. Will you go to law with me because I say my first wife lived upon potatoes and salt, at Newcastle upon Tyne ? or for saying, that there was such a tradesman as T. W---k taken into the connection ? 1778 ? or for saying that a broken farmer was taken into the priests office for bread for himself, and family, when he could get bread no longer with farming in 1779 ? there are many preachers who know that what I say is truth, but if you call for proof I must go down into a marshy country by the seaside. I am at no loss for proof, and that you very well know.

But one will say the English laws are very strict concerning a man's character : I am glad of that ; but did the conference know this when they published my name in the magazine as “ desisting,” tho' they knew it was a groundless untruth before they published it ? or did that courier know this, who came with dispatches from Mr. B--n of Bristol, to Gloucester, Worcester, and some other places by the stage coach ; and was so dilligent among the stewards, going from house to house, in order to calumniate my character thoroughly ? or did that courier who came with dispatches from Eversham, know this ; when he came to Worcester by the stage coach with an open letter in his hand, which had been broke open by Mr. H--ll, one of the members of conference ? or did that honourable member know this, when he broke my letter open ; and dispatched it by a courier to Worcester, for the inspection of the stewards ; and this courier to ca-

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luminate my character again from house to house ? or did that honourable member T. W--k know this, when he calumniated my character to the leaders and stewards at Borslom, untill one of the stewards came to tell me for my "*good to leave the place ?*" Or did those gentlemen in Staffordshire know any thing of the British constitution ? when they broke my letter open, and wrote a little more insult to the abuse there was in it already, and sent it after me to Worcester ? Or did Mr. H--n know this, when he silyly blackened me in my neighbourhood by telling the people I was a man that "ought not to be encouraged ?" Or has there been a new law lately made about mens characters, that you are forever threatening me with law ? But stop a little ; will you shame yourselves quite out ? is "*the helm of reason lost ?*" will you make religion *stink in the nostrils of* "hackney-coachmen ?" J. P--d, are there no laws for "We whose names are underwritten ?" are the laws only made for those whom you expell, and put out, "for *any cause* which to the conference my seem fit or necessary ?" Or have you adopted the plan of the Papish priests, not to go to law with a brother priest, but first degrade him, and then deliver him over to the secular arm ?

My soul is burdened while I write ; my heart is fit to bleed while I meditate on these things, to see how religion is sunk among some great and good men ; or I am gone quite blind.

But suppose you go to law with me, you have the advantage ; you can make collections throughout the three kingdoms ; and you may buy law for money, so if you could ruin me, and sell up the little property my wife had before I married her, and send me to a jail and her to the workhouse, after all the scandalous usage we have met with from you already ;

ready ; would it raise your reputation ? indeed it might strike a terror into the poor old preachers, your servants ; they might lay their hands upon their mouths, but what I say would remain as it is, only more confirmed. For be assured, I have a system of conference-logic by me, which never a preacher in the conference can deny.

Of all the things that ever I heard with my ears, or saw with my eyes ; nothing was ever so astonishing, as the conduct of some of the methodist preachers. But are these the salutary laws of the British constitution ? that a man may be insulted, abused, degraded, and slandered, all over two or three nations, so that he may be hissed at, let him settle wherever he will ; and if he makes any public defence, sue him at the common law, ruin him, and then send him to prison for life ? What say ye, ye judges of the earth : ye that ride upon white asses ? is this the glory of the British constitution ?

But one cries out, “ *All that you have met with is long of yourself.* ” I acknowledge it. In the 1 Kings, chap. 20. we have an account of Ahab king of Israel conquering Ben-hadad king of Syria, and making peace with him, contrary to God’s design. One of the sons of the prophets was sent to meet Ahab returning from the victory, and said unto him ; “ Thus saith the Lord ; because thou hast let go out of thy hand, a man whom I appointed to utter destruction ; therefore, thy life shall go for his life ; and thy people for his people. And the king of Israel went to his house heavy and displeased,” with the prophet. and it is reasonably believed he imprisoned him ; but the prophet had nobody to *blame* but himself, he found the truth of those words which the Rev. Mr. W--y wrote in a letter to me
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dated Sep. 10, 1785. " Finding fault with others, is not the way to recommend yourself."

Three years after this king Jehoshaphat paid a visit to Ahab king of Israel, and Ahab proposed going up to Ramoth-gilead to battle, and invited king Jehoshaphat to go with him ; who accepted the proposal. Then king Ahab gathered his prophets together about 400 men, and said unto them, shall I go against Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I forbear ? and they said go up ; for the lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. But king Jehoshaphat had his doubts, and said, is there not here a prophet of the lords besides all these, that we may enquire of him ? and the king of Israel said, there is one man Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we may enquire of the lord, but I hate him ; for he doth not prophecy good concerning me, but evil. Jehoshaphat said, let not the king say so. A messenger being dispatched to hasten Micaiah the son of Imlah, he said unto him, Behold now the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth : let thy word I pray thee be like one of them, and speak thou good unto the king.

But Micaiah said, as the lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me *that* I will speak. After he had had some little conversation with the king, he told him of his death in the field of battle ; and the scattering of his troops. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, " Did not I tell thee that he would prophecy no good concerning me, but evil." It is plain Ahab loved flattering, and his flatterers were his downfall, and because Micaiah would not flatter him, he cried out, take Micaiah and carry him back unto Amon, the governor of the city ; and under the close inspection of Joash the king's son ; and say, thus saith the king ; Put this fellow in prison, and

feed him with bread of affliction, and with the water of affliction, untill I return in peace. Did not his majesty think him "*one of the most impertinent*" fellows that ever stood before him? it is thought this was the same prophet who reprov'd Ahab three years before this, and that he had been in prison all that time, and was now sent back to live upon bread and water of affliction; and very probably died in prison, yet he had nobody to "*blame*" but himself, for the messenger that fetch'd him to the king, desired him to speak the same words that the multitude spoke; and because he did not, prison and afflictions were his portion. But his pains and his sorrows are o'er. Jeremiah suffered much for "*finding fault with others*," he saw it would not "*recommend*" himself, yet he never changed his practice, he followed god's word to prison, and to death.

There has been many strange ups and downs in the church of God in all ages, particularly under the judges of Israel. And when ever oppression brought on a general repentance, so that God graciously rais'd up a deliverer, they soon corrupted themselves again, and all seem'd to go one way; nay! when the Lord rais'd up Gideon that wonderful deliverer, *he* was a means of leading the children of Israel aside from God, by setting up idolatry in his own house; but we do not hear of any man in the nation who dared to reprove him for it, it would have been "*finding fault with*" the greatest man in the nation.

Solomon was a great, a good, and wise, king: and doubtless his downfall made a gazing on all sides: but who durst reprove him? neither priest prophet, prince, nor people. For he had declared, "Where the word of a king is, there is power" and the "Kings wrath as the roaring of a lion."

And

And if any had attempted to reform the abuses, which his ungodly practice occasioned, it is probable he must have paid for his "*impertenance*" with the loss of his life, and not in so easy a manner as being strangled.

When Solomon forsook God and worshiped idols, he laid a heavy tax upon the people to maintain his numerous tribe of outlandish women, whom he had taken for wives, and concubines; which we are told amounted to a thousand. The priests, the Lord's watchmen did not reprove him that we hear of. They seemed to be a company of men who studied their own ease, more than the good of peoples souls. And when Ahijah was sent to reprove Solomon, he did not dare to approach the royal throne, but went out of Jerusalem, and found Jereboam in the way, and they two were alone in the field: and Ahijah caught hold of Jereboam's new garment, and rent it in twelve peices, and said; take thee ten peices: for I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give thee ten tribes, because they have forsaken me. When Solomon heard of it, his wrath was kindled, and what became of the prophet we know not? but Jeroboam was obliged to flee into Egypt to save his life.

The Lord wrought a "Gracious reformation by the ministry of Ezrah, and Nehemiah, but the people soon turned out of the way, being led on, and encouraged by the example of the priests. Nehm. chap. xiii.

The high priest was allied to one Tobiah, and he prepared him one of the priests chambers to live in, altho' he was no priest, no levite, nor convert. This displeased the people, and many of them despised the offering of the Lord, and did not bring their sacrifices to the temple as usual: so the levites had

had not sufficient maintenance, they were obliged to flee into the country to get their living by the cultivation of their own fields, while the high-priest and his bosom friend Tobiah, enjoyed all the pleasures of a plentiful table, magnificent attendance, and swarms of flatterers, wherever they went.

But why did not the inferior priests, and levites reason the case with the high priest; when they saw him wander so far out of God's way? probably they did. And he might tell them, if they could mend themselves to go quietly away; and not make an uproar in Jerusalem whereby they would "Hurt the work" but "Do no good" and if any of them were urgent for a removal of grievances, he might tell them with priestly authority to "Take something for the disease of the tongue, without delay, &c. &c." and "If it suit you and your wife, you may go home, a young man will supply your place."

These poor despised levites, learning that the high priest was as unteachable, as ungovernable, and was "determined to have his own way" and nobody could turn him, left the city and temple service, and with sorrow of heart, went on their way weeping, to seek their bread where they could find it. But when Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem, all that the high priest could say in defence of his conduct about "Hurting the work" was weak, and useless, he cast the furniture of Tobiah out of the chamber, reproved the high priest, recalled the poor disinherited levites, and set them in their places: then the people brought their sacrifices to the temple of the Lord, and the priests and levites had all their wants supplied.

A love of power; partiality, and a desire after honour, has proved fatal to the work of God among all sects, and parties of people, in all ages. Now
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wherever partiality creeps in ; pure religion runs out, and God is not confined to any sect, or party of people now ; no more than when he dwelt in his ancient tabernacle at Shilo. When the people forsook God, he forsook his lovely habitation. Again ; when the Jews forsook God at Jerusalem, he forsook that magnificent temple : altho' it was the finest piece of building that the sun ever saw ; when the people had grieved God's spirit, all its beauty, all its grandeur, all its glory : could not prevail upon the Lord to stay. I always was of this opinion ; that God did carry on his work among many different sects of people in England ; but I was partial to the methodists. Among these people I had every reason to believe God's glorious presence dwelt, there were so many sinners convinced, converted, and brought to the saving knowledge of the truth, that it was evident God owned the ministry of their word. But if partiality, a thirst after power, injustice, oppression, slander, abuse, and degrading of God's ministering servants take place, farewell ; God can carry on his work of saving souls without this. And I think something like it is got in among the methodists, while one preacher's wife sits down to a few potatoes and salt, another has a servant to attend her with her great coat and umbrella. Another has a company of children, no servant, and but few friends, another cannot do herself the pleasure of dining with Mr. and Mrs --- to day except the servant calls a coach. I think " The end of these things is death " to the work of God ; in all churches.

I would now take a little notice of the hue and cry that has been made up and down the country about me where-ever I had travelled yet, namely ; " He strikes at the work---he slanders the greatest man in the world---he is disaffected---if I had done

so, I should have thought myself beyond the reach of mercy. O that wretch ! &c. &c." with a number of such like expressions. So that the methodists are given to understand that I am turned apostate, if not worse, if any thing can be worse. Now I will appeal to them who knew me for some years together, in various counties in England ; to the people of Thirsk circuit in Yorkshire ; if they ever saw any thing in my conduct that discovered either lunacy, or apostacy. In Bedford circuit, in Bradford circuit, and last of all, when I travelled in Gloucester circuit ; at Worcester, Stroud, or any other places in that country, and at present in Leicestershire ; where I have been settled near three years, since I was turned out of the connection by Mr. W-f-y. I say I appeal to these people, if they have seen any thing in my conduct that marks me out for an apostate ?

No ; no : my apostacy seems to be for telling the truth to them who did not like to hear it ; and were got as far above reproof as Amaziah king of Judah, when the Lord sent a prophet to reprove him. 2 Chro. 2, 5, 16. " And it came to pass as he talked with him, that the king said unto him. Art thou made of the king's council ? forbear : why shouldst thou be smitten ?" The king was determined to have his own way, which was the downfall both of himself and the nation.

My expostulating the case with some great men, nine years ago, was done in private writing, by way of complaint, but I fared no better than the prophet ; for they smote me with their tongues ; and encouraged others to smite me also. I complained again ; and though I was not condemned before the Lord for it, they continued to smite me with their tongues for it. I complained again ; but I was told

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“there was no remedy but patience,” and if I did not like, I might go away : but I was desired to “go away quietly, and say nothing to hurt the work.” When I found that the preachers continued smiting me with their tongues, and scorned to hear my complaints, I sent a circular letter to each travelling preacher as private as I could, and was then turned out of the connection with contempt. Now I will ask any man of reason, wherein he thinks my great sin lieth. One cries, *the method, and the manner, &c. &c. was wrong*. If a man has an old sore, it is not easy to touch it right ; and if you have no better arguments than these, to prove that I am “one of the vilest wretches that ever was in the connection,” lay your hands upon your mouths, it will be your wisdom : I will hear what the word of God saith.

When Peter and Paul were together in public company, Peter acted the hypocrite concerning the observation of the jewish ceremonial law. Paul reprov'd him before them all, and published the whole account in his letter to the Galatian Churches. Could not Peter's friends have set up a hue and cry, “he slanders the greatest minister in the world ; he strikes at Christ, he will hurt the work, he is one of the vilest wretches that ever was upon the face of the earth, &c.?” it is very probable there was no law in those days touching a man's character, otherwise, Peter had a fine opportunity.

Again, when Paul wrote his epistle to the church at Corinth, concerning the disorders, as well as sins which had crept into that church ; could none of them cry out, “he will hurt the work ?” especially as the work of God was then in its infant state at Corinth. But the Corinthians (to their immortal honour,) purged out the old leaven.

Again,

Again, when our Lord was in company with the scribes and lawyers, one of them seemed to understand the logic of the day : “ *Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.* ” And this will hurt our character, and our preaching ; but our blessed Lord went on. Wo be unto you, &c.

Again, when Mr. Wesley wrote his “ Address to the clery,” could none of them reply ? were they all dumb scholars ? No ; one or two I have met with in my travels, who understood the logic of the day : one at Leeds in Yorkshire, told me Mr. Wesley was the greatest enemy to the church that ever was in England : and another at a place where I was taken up by a constable, and imprisoned in bridewell for preaching out of doors ; and had before the Commissioners of the impress act ; and was to be closely examined, & frightened ; if not sent to serve in his Majesty marines abroad. In the course of my examination, the Rev. Mr. Wesley’s name was mentioned, which militated heavily again me ; for a venerable clergyman cried out, “ He has done more hurt to the church of England, than any man that ever was before him, and I hope there will never be another like him. You do us clergy more hurt than all the dissenters in England ; you bring us into disesteem before the people wherever you come.”

Again, when Mr. Whitfield (as I was told) wrote a small tract, which I have by me, addressed to the then Moravian bishop in London ; he attacked their practises, and mentioned their names, fully and properly spelled. Could none of them exclaim, “ He strikes at the work ; he takes away our characters.” But as the Moravians were foreigners, probably they could not have any recourse to our English laws concerning their characters.

Again, when the Rev. Mr. Wesley wrote and published his opinion against the people called Quakers, could none of them reply? had none of them learned the logic of the day? "He is the vilest wretch that ever was called a preacher---he will hurt the work."

Again, when that good man John Nelson wrote against the Moravians in Yorkshire; who did he oblige? or who did he please? did he oppose what he thought was wrong? did he write for the Redeemer's glory, or not? and might not those people without ever framing an argument against what he wrote, have cried out; "*He strikes at the work, &c.*"

Now what does all this noise that you have made up and down in the country about me "*striking at the work,*" amount to? are not your arguments as lame as those in the magazines, in favour of the young preachers governing the old ones? and as blind as that piece which was signed by sixty-nine preachers, and prefaced with "We whose names are underwritten?"

One cries, but what the apostle Paul and others wrote was a different thing. How different? do not make yourselves a laughing stock before the nation. Did they not write against the ungodly practice of professors? and have I wrote against any thing else? Would not Paul have lifted up his hands as well as his voice, with many more of the old preachers at Leeds conference, against that swaggering tradesman T. W--k? and would not Paul and Peter both have joined the old preachers at London against the broken farmer? And again, at Bristol, would they not have helped the old preachers against Mr. W--y, to declare that such men were a reproach to the methodist preachers? to be maintained by
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poor hard working people, who never would work for their own bread.

Again : When that ungodly, abusive " Deed Poll " was drawn up at London, subjecting a hundred preachers worse than parish apprentices, to be servants for the members of the " Deed Poll ", would not all the apostles have risen up as the heart of one man ; and have wrote Jchabod upon the first page ; and the glory of the Lord is departed from the conference upon the last page.

Again ; when I was insulted year after year, as I have mentioned : then turned out of the connection and degraded without a hearing ; would not Paul have put you in mind that when the Jews desired judgement against him, Festus answered " *It is not the custom of the Romans* " (in their heathen state) " *To give up any man till he that is accused have the accusers face to face, and have liberty to make his defence ; touching the crime laid to his charge* " but " We whose names are underwritten " go a shorter way to work, they can accuse, arraign, judge, condemn, degrade, and expell a man out of the connection, without ever giving him a hearing at all. Would not the apostles have shook the dust off their feet against your conduct.

Again, suppose the apostles were now upon the face of the earth, and could get each one a conference ticket, and hear what reports are brought and laid before that public assembly, and how the old, or young absent preachers were slandered for two days together, a little more or less. Would they say that I was an apostate for exclaiming against it ? would they not cry out with old dying Jacob Gen. 49 ver 6 " O my soul, come not thou into their secret, into their assembly, mine honour be not thou united " for many of the old preachers has said as much as this

this in my hearing in the public conferences. But it was to no purpose, they did *no good* the old practice was still followed.

Whatever some of the preachers, or people may think of me, I want to save my soul. But if I am the greatest sinner in the world, who will point out my sin, (for no man has attempted it yet) that I may repent? I must confess I am not convinced that sending a circular letter full of truths, (tho disagreeable truths) in as private a manner as I could; is the most diabolical thing that ever was done since methodism existed. There is a clause in the "Deed Poll" article eighth, mentions, that when a man according to the preceeding rules is "So expelled and put out, shall cease to be a member thereof, to all intents and purposes as tho' he was naturally dead" does it follow that he must be inevitable lost; when you have insulted him for seven years, more or less; and turned him out of the connection with contempt "for *any cause* which to the conference may seem fit or necessary" is he got "*beyond the reach of mercy*;" J. P--d, but not of your slander. Will you send him fresh menaces, conference after conference, by the preachers who are appointed to travel in the country where the degraded preacher is settled? and blacken him afresh in all the societies round about the country? I am sorry that I have reason to say, I am ashamed of your conduct, and if some of you are not ashamed of yourselves, I think the public will shame for you: but I leave it.

One told me that the methodist preachers could make me appear as ridiculous as I could them. It is no great difficulty to make a methodist preacher look ridiculous; only travel round the circuit where he has been stationed twelve months; and glean up what any prejudiced person will say, and they will generally

generally tell you enough to make most of the preachers look something worse than ridiculous; but I do not want to make them look ridiculous. There are a number of them that I am not worthy to stand before, who signed the "Deed Poll" at London, but what could they do? they had broke their constitutions, had wives and families; and they were not willing to be turned out of the connection with contempt, to go to their parishes.

Again, I was deterred from publishing my case, by one who told me that somebody would reply; may be so. And as I do not say all that I might say, in my next I may say a little more of what I could say now. Another cries out *there will be writers*. I do not wonder at that, for remember; the members of the "Deed Poll" are a hundred; I am but one, and a poor insignificant one. No professor of the Greek tongue, no Latinist, and but a poor grammarian. I have but few friends, and my antagonists think they can bring sixty thousand well disciplined troops into the field at once; yet I think they will be mistaken. Nothing could encourage me to engage in this unequal conflict, only truth, truth is on my side, or I am sunk beneath a man.

But here is one thing in my favour, probably no scholar will think me worthy of his notice; for I remember when Mr. Mc.N. was shuffled out of the connection, there were heavy complaints against him in the public conference, that he had "hurt the work." One proposed writing against him, in order to retrieve poor bleeding methodism from his voracious paws; but another opposed it warmly, saying, "It will only make him a man of consequence, let him alone, let him die:" this motion passed "without a dissenting voice." So it may be with me. But if any man does write, I would advise

vise him for his "own good" and the characters of the preachers whom it may concern, to let my circular letter alone. I shall be sorry if you drive me to the disagreeable necessity of explaining that scarecrow with its long head, many faces, wide mouth, and moveable teeth : or that moving land-battery with cannons, always pointing to the man who would attack it ; or that wonderful garrison ; dreadful to behold, built with logical wood, hay, stubble, flax and pitch : but if any one writes, let him shew some solid reason for what he says ; do not make use of lame blind logic. I have had enough of that, and you know I can see through it. And if by fair arguments you shew me, that my sin is as great as it has been represented ; I will not only acknowledge my sin, but I will recant all that you shall prove by scriptural arguments well founded, to be sinful. But remember no lame blind logic.

The Rev. Mr. W--y was the man for whom I had the greatest regard of any man upon the face of the earth ; his indefatigable way of life, travelling, preaching, writing, and many other things, surpassed any thing that I ever read, or heard of, and I wondered when I heard privately, two old preachers in conversation about the Rev. Mr. W-f--y's sickness at Bristol conference in 1783, one said to the other, " I have often wished to hear of his death, so that he did but die rejoicing in God." The other answered, " I have wished for it scores of times, so that he did but die happy ; for he is grown old, he is unteachable, and has so many flatterers, &c. &c." The next year, this " Deed Poll " was enrolled in his Majesty's high court of Chancery ; and these same two preachers changed faces at London conference in 1785 ; and has their names among
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“ We whose names are underwritten ” in the first column of the minutes for that year.

I have often heard it complained of in public conference, that the case of preachers widows was not fairly stated ; if the preacher who travelled in a circuit where a widow lived, was a little prejudiced against her, or her deceased husband, or misinformed by her neighbours, he represented her case rather better than it was ; so she had less money from the preacher's fund than she ought to have had, and was often put to hard shifts, if not to want. On the contrary, if a preacher was prejudiced in favour of a widow, or her deceased husband, or misinformed by her neighbours, he represented her circumstances a little worse than they really were ; and got her more money, than some others who wanted it much worse.

These grievances were complained of in public conference, year after year ; and Mr. W--y was desired “ without a dissenting voice,” to settle this matter in such a manner, that the widows and old worn-out preachers, should have a claim upon the preachers fund, for a certain patrimony, and not to be under the power or prejudice of any preacher whatsoever. But when this “ Deed Poll” which cost about two hundred pounds, was finished ; it had taken up its time in providing for the security of the preaching houses, and laying down a code of laws by which the conference was to govern all things that should come under its inspection, which laws were superfluous ; for,

First, there was no occasion for one of those laws, so long as the preachers loved God and one another, and,

Secondly, when pure religion is lost, those laws are so unfair, so unchristian, and so unbrotherly, so
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unjust and oppressive, that they are not likely to keep alive, but to destroy all harmony among the preachers, as well the members of the deed, as those who are not members ; while the old worn out preachers, and poor widows with their fatherless children, are passed over in dead silence ; leaving the widow with her little crying children, exposed to all their fears and sorrows, that ever they were ; and under the power and prejudice of any preacher who does not like them, more than ever. And “ We whose names are underwritten ” declare there approbation of the “ substance and design of the deed.” The widow and the fatherless have nothing to thank you for. May God bless them, and raise them up some friends, that they may not have to cringe to you for bread.

Some of the preachers may cry out, “ You seem to reflect strangely upon the conference, as if you would raise suspicion among the widows that we are not honest.

Let them read over this little pamphlet, which gives an account of your honest dealings with me, and you may be sure they will sit down silent enough, when they find “ *there is no remedy but patience,* ” but at present I spare you, for the sake of many of the old preachers, who are drawn into the net.

And concerning reflecting upon the preachers ; “ *is there not cause ?* ” have you not driven me to it ? and I only speak the truth : So I would advise you to take notice of that short sermon frequently preached to my wife and me, when we complained of ill usage : “ There is a needs-be for all these things ; you must take them as from the hand of God : it is designed for your good.” I am confident that there is a “ *needs-be* ” for my writing, and I hope the methodist preachers will consider it

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as from the hand of God, and it is designed to do them good. "Purge out therefore the old leaven, and become a new lump."

I think the grand design of the "Deed Poll" begins (like the sun when he emerges from under the massy clouds of darkness to give his light) to shew itself more clearly; does it not appear, that a few leading men who had already got much more power and praise than their constitutions could bear; yet (Nimrod like) thirsted for more? Did they not want to have all the other preachers, and the directions of the public money in their own power, but this could not be done; unless they could first get the preaching houses out of the hands of the trustees, in order to have them settled upon a more permanent foundation, and better secured to the methodist preachers interest: which was a solid truth. Then follows the "Deed Poll," the subject matter of which was contrived with as much secrecy, as when Joshua sent the lyers-in-wait against Ai. And when it made its appearance, it astonished the people; they were something like the Assyrians, when they were surprised by Gideon's three companies of flaming lamps, in the dead of the night. For it made its appearance not in the state of an infant; but a full grown monster. It was attested, it was signed, it was sealed, it was printed, and threatened every man with fire and sword, *expulsion and degradation*, who should oppose its princely reign.

But tho' it was a full grown monster, it had but a sickly constitution; so its case was considered at the London conference, and much strengthened by the adherence of sixty-nine preachers names. Again, it was considered at Bristol, and received all the strength that it could get with its new name. So
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now "*there is no remedy but patience.*" At the time this deed was drawn up, there were about two hundred preachers in England, Scotland, and Ireland; one hundred were made lords and governors, the other hundred were compelled to serve as 'prentices, which could never have been effected, had not the trustees resigned their power to the conference; for if an old preacher had been ill used by the governors of the conference, some society might have taken pity upon the old servant of the living God, and have taken care of him, and provided the comforts of life for him until death. (Probably the heads of the conference foresaw this.)

But now it is otherwise, where the preaching house is made sure to the conference, for a preacher may be ill used by one member one year, and worse the next, and so on. He must bow, and obey the orders of conference or "go home" nay, supposing that this preacher had in former times collected the most of that money that built that house, and that society had strained every nerve to give all they could spare; the old preacher may weep over the people, and the people may weep over the preacher, but he may be told "*there is no remedy but patience*" the conference may appoint the broken farmer with his large family, or T. W-----k that I have mentioned, who is himself one of the members of conference, (whose wife must be looked upon) to the use and enjoyment of the preaching house, dwelling house, &c. and the people may be told "*there is no remedy but patience*" one cries they may withdraw their subscriptions. They may. But is not this "Deed Poll" the mother of confusion, and one of the seven abominations which the Lord hateth, sowing discord among brethren." But suppose the preaching houses had fallen into the hands of the trustees,

trustees, and that they had disliked an old preacher and turned him out, he might have found some other place where he might have been useful. But when he is degraded by the conference for "*any cause*" that a majority thinks fit or necessary, he is forbid to preach not only in the preaching houses, but in any of the societies, and if he would preach at his own house, the methodists are forbid to hear him, and both preachers, and people unite all their strength to raise, and spread evil reports of him, that he may be hissed at by all sorts of people, and nobody go to hear him.

I am truly sorry that I have lived to see such methodism as is practised at this day in Leicestershire, whatever may be practised in other counties, I know not, but it is hoped, something better.

One cries out ; "*You should not meddle with the Deed Poll, it will do you much hurt.*"

A few years ago the method of carrying on the work of God among the methodists, was printed, and publickly sold all over the three kingdoms ; which gave great satisfaction among the people, and did their souls much good. And has there been another code of laws made since, which cost two hundred pounds making ; that when the contents thereof are known, will do the peoples souls no good, but much hurt ? how is it ? are you at last ashamed of your "*Deed Poll.*"

Now I would advise "*We whose names are underwritten,*" as "*all those who have travelled four years are to be present at the next conference*" to insist upon them *all* signing that scandalous "*Deed Poll*" as they live at your mercy, how can they refuse it ? you may "*expell and put out*" as many as you please "*for any cause that the conference may see fit or necessary*" and if they sign it,
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they will be as bad as yourselves : and the next conference you may " expell and put out " as many as you please " *for any cause, &c.* " with advantage ; for you do it by virtue of the " Deed Poll " which they themselves had signed their approbation of. So they may lay their hands upon their mouths, and " *withdraw in silence* " they may " live upon potatoes and butter-milk " you may " elect " young men to fill up their places. And whatever becomes of precious souls, whether they are saved or eternally lost " let no house be built on any consideration, till the ground be first settled on the conference plan. " This is something new.

I think the " Deed Poll " is as curious a thing as ever graced any religious history for many ages back. In 1784, it was contrived and brought forward contrary to every branch of true religion ; and imposed upon the preachers by force at Leeds conference. In 1785, it was polled for at the London conference chiefly by its own chosen members, and received a majority. In 1786 its case was again considered, where it was baptized, and called the " Deed Poll : " and in 1788, at the London conference there was a form drawn up for preaching houses, and where its memorable name stands, " as established by a deed poll, " and is to be inserted in all the writings of preaching houses for the future. So there is no fear of its being forgotten, no more than of the steps by which it is arrived to what it is.

Another cries, " you take away the characters of the preachers ; " what, with telling them a little of the truth ? I am sorry that this should be the case. But have a little patience with me, and I will put you in a way of retrieving your characters with advantage.

Let those preachers who now stand as lords and governors

governors of the rest ; entirely relinquish all their powers and privileges, to the other hundred who are now apprentices to the present members of conference ; and let them be invested with all the powers, and privileges which the deed conveys to its members ; and let them become the members of conference : this may easily be done ; and publish it in the Arminian Magazine : for certainly no methodist preachers would think of having a power over their brethren ; which they would not be willing their brethren should have over them.

But concerning the powers and privileges of the " Deed Poll," I am either right or wrong ; if there are no privileges attending its members, what signifies making so much ado, conference after conference, about an empty title ? do you do it on purpose to grieve those old preachers whom " Mr. W-s-y does not like ?" would it not much more become the preachers of perfect holiness to give it up ; and publicly disclaim it ? But if all the fore-mentioned powers and privileges do attend upon the members of the " Deed Poll," and that you do ; and are determined to lord it over God's heritage, there is but one way left for you to retrieve your characters, and this you may do with great advantage. Give up all the powers and privileges you now enjoy by virtue of that deed, to your brethren ; and then you may preach with comfort to your congregations, saying, *be ye followers of us, as we are of Christ, who thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet was among his disciples as him that served.* But if you are determined to bear down all before you, to insult, abuse, expell, and with the horns of your " Deed Poll" push out of the connection, and devour with open mouth every man who groans under your oppressive measures, you may
abide

abide by the consequences. The eyes of the nation are upon you. The people will watch your works with more diligence than they hear you preach. So consider well what you intend to do. For if no abler hand will undertake the disagreeable task, while I live, I shall be ready to answer any logical trash that any of you can write in defence of an ungodly, abusive system. But some of the present members may object to the above proposal, saying; many of the other preachers are not proper men to be governors.

Are they not as proper as some of you; if not, send them a letter de-cachet; and tell them they shall preach no more in any of your societies. You may have young men to supply their places; then publish it in the magazines that they "desisted." But when you turn them out of the connection, do not turn their money out of the preachers fund, that they have been paying in for ten, twenty, or thirty years, it may be of use to "We whose names are underwritten."

Some one may probably ask what is become of Michael Moorhouse and his wife? I answer; my wife who never thought it any disgrace to work; sits down to her business, and is glad that she has full employment; while the broken farmer (that great reformer of our sinful nation,) with a large family, are appointed by the conference to some circuit where they are well maintained by the poor hard working methodists. And T. W-----k the tradesman I have mentioned, (another great reformer of our guilty land,) with his wife and son, are riding from one good circuit to another in the stage coach. And when "We whose names are underwritten" has stationed their brethren, and divided the public money

money as "the conference may see fit or necessary," they ride through my neighbourhood by five or six at once in the stage coach. O blessed "Deed Poll" what things thou hast done for thy favourites, I think they are like Mr. J. P--d, he said he would shew them "the difference of it."

But how long do you think God will blefs such like conferences; and such like practises, to the union of either preachers or people? will not God raise up a different people; who will serve him in a different way; bringing forth the fruits of righteousness.

Suppose any of you cry out, "you have a poor opinion of the methodists; both preachers and people." I answer, I have as good an opinion of them as the author of that sermon in the magazines seems to have. He tells us "Certainly many of the methodists are already fallen. Many are falling at this very time, and there is great reason to apprehend, that many more will fall, most of whom will rise no more. Arminian Mag. 1784. p. 406.

Were ever the poor methodists with a number of old faithful preachers laid so low by any man's pen? is it not high time for God to raise up another people? but that sermon cries up the religion of the select hundred, who are governors over the rest, in a wonderful manner; and should not they cry up the religion of those who contrived the "Deed Poll."

Mr. H-ll seemed to think it his duty so to do: when he began preaching at six o'clock in the evening at Worcester, after which he met the society, and cried up the travels, preaching, and writings, &c. of the Rev. Mr. W-f-y and particularly the magazines; until it chimed nine as the people went home, weary enough, as well as displeased, with his pressing the poor people who had not a suffici-

ency of bread, to go without breakfast once a week, whereby they might save three halfpence, which would amount to sixpence a month, and then give it for a magazine. *But he thought it his duty.*

Again, some one may probably cry out, "I wonder what Michael Moorhouse wants."

I have no favours to ask of the methodist preachers, and if you can contrive to bring me to poverty by your fresh threatenings sent yearly by the new preachers from conference, to blacken me again in the country where I live; and I should be obliged to beg my bread; I will pass by the doors of "We whose names are underwritten," and I will not be troublesome at the doors of those great men who contrived the "Deed Poll."

But probably the poor methodists may ask you to send the broken farmer home with his large family: and that swaggering tradesman T. W--k, with his wife and fine son. He has got plenty of money by being a preacher. May be the poor hard working people who keep but a bare table to begin with, may not see the necessity of going without breakfast once a week in order to purchase a magazine, and once a week without supper to maintain such like gentlemen; but I leave things to be considered by time.

Indeed Mr. S. D. the broken farmer, has a strong claim upon the poor methodists for a maintenance: he has two sisters married to two travelling preachers, though one desisted: and the wife's sister married a third. So he thinks himself secure enough no doubt. He and his large family are likely to be a legacy for the poor methodists.

Now I will appeal to those preachers who withstood Mr. W-f--y with becoming courage at Leeds in 1778, concerning that tradesman I have mentioned; and again at London in 1779, about the broken farmer, and twice as much at Bristol, in 1780.

I say

I say, I appeal unto you ; what would any of you say if you married as gracious a woman as you could find, and for peace sake she sat down oppressed with sickness, to live upon potatoes and salt, milk and bread and the like ? and provision was made for a swaggering tradesman, and a broken farmer with a large family to ride in their coaches to some of the best of the circuits, and you and your wives to be insulted by such like gentlemen, as you know I and my wife were at Borslom ; and turned out of the connection with contempt for "*finding fault* : " then degraded without a hearing, and the methodist preachers to blacken you afresh, conference after conference all over the country, and threaten you with law if you were not silent. So that all sorts of people might use you with contempt and slander. I appeal to you who ride in your coaches from the conference by six at once ; how would you conduct yourselves ? would you think it your duty to sit down quietly under such unreasonable, unjust, contemptuous slander ? what would you do in such a case ? would you go home quietly to your parishes ?

As I have laid a short account of my case before the public, let them read and judge. And if the people think I am one of the vilest sinners that ever lived ; let them continue to hear, and approve what the preachers say ; and let all sorts of people despise me. But if the public cannot see that I deserve burning at a stake, for speaking a little of the truth : let them speak their minds freely.

Whatever the public may think or say, blessed be the Lord, I trust I and my wife can adopt the language of good old Jacob, when he blessed Joseph on his death bed. Gen. xlix. 23.

Tho' the archers have sorely grieved us, and shot at us, and hated us, our bows abode in strength, and the arms of our hands were made strong by the hands

hands of the mighty God of Jacob. From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel. from thence are the springs of grace, and streams of comfort and consolation ; which has often strengthened and refreshed our souls as we have travelled through many tribulations, in this howling wilderness, on our way to the wealthy land. And we will recommend our cause to him who despiseth not the cry of the poor prisoners ; and who is the same yesterday, to day, and forever ; blessed be his unchangeable name. Here the poor old despised preachers may find a redress of grievances, in their closets with God.

Concerning this new scheme of ordination among the methodist preachers, I can say but little about it, as it is new ; only what has been said over and over again in general ; namely, that there was no occasion for it. For according to the best accounts we have now published in the Arminian Magazines, there was much more pure religion among the methodists, both preachers and people, thirty years ago, than there is now. And in those days the preachers thought it their duty, to press the people to cleave close to the church : they were told, *if they forsook the church, they would loose the life of God out of their souls* ; and conference after conference there were lectures given to the travelling preachers, to the same effect. And those lectures were enforced by what was *then* thought self-evident, that wherever any society left off going to church, they lost their religion. And when I was stationed in Dublin in 1772, there came over a letter from the Rev. Mr. -----, to Mr. J--o ; informing him that “ *Lady H--t---g--n had fixt a train of her mungrel clergy all down into Cornwall.*” Are the methodist preachers convinced after fifty years experience, that Lady H--t---g--n had adopted a more excellent plan for bringing

bring lost sinners to God, than they ? by means of what Mr. ----- called her "*mongrel clergy* ?" and are they now about to adopt that excellent plan ; in order to revive the work of God among the poor fallen methodists ? who we are told "are falling at this very time. And there is great reason to apprehend that many more will fall, most of whom will rise no more." *Arminian Mag.* 1784, p. 406.

God made man upright ; but he has found out many inventions ; yet I fear this invention will never raise souls out of the ruins of their fallen state : but this it may do ; it may raise some of ~~the~~ ^{us} whose names are under written" above their fellows, and they may ride in their coaches, while their servants walk on foot ; but what other great good is to be accomplished, time alone must determine. But suppose an old methodist, who was converted to God in some plain congregation, and died twenty years ago ? was to revisit his native place. Would he know old methodism in its new "*Deed Poll*" dress ; with a long black gown, and a band about its neck ; standing reading an abstract of the church liturgy ; instead of crying out "*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish* ?" and then to observe Mrs. and Mrs. and Mrs. and the preachers wife, go from the public worship, by two and two, covered over with a fine umbrella. What would the old saint of God say : would he not say *the glory of God is departed from this place* ; and then depart and leave it also. The more I think about your *Deed Poll* conferences ; *Deed Poll* writings for preaching houses, *Deed Poll* dress, *Deed Poll* religion, and *Deed Poll* practice ; the more my soul is burthened before the Lord. O that God would make a glorious descent in favour of his poor despised, weeping, praying people.

It is very well known to all my neighbours, that when I was so shamefully degraded, and turned out of the connection, I and my wife laboured to get into some business in order to get bread ; and though we were laughed to scorn by many of the methodists ; we behaved ourselves peaceably, as became people professing godliness. Tho' almost all our acquaintances forsook us, and looked shy : expecting to hear some scandalous thing that I had done, which they thought was the occasion of my being banished from the methodist connection, and though the preachers were continually setting the people against me, they laid nothing to my charge as the people expected ? and as I began to preach a little in my own house, a few people attended, and God was graciously pleased to comfort us together. But the methodist preachers laboured to make my little congregation as small as they could, and those few methodists who did attend, were slighted by the rest.

When I had been at home a year and a half, and nothing criminal proved against me ; a gentleman in the neighbourhood who had fitted up a pretty little house for the use of the methodist preachers, began to mention it to them, that he thought of asking me to preach there on a sabbath day, when they had nobody else. But the then assistant preacher opposed it with all his might, from time to time. Untill at last the gentleman made the following remarks.

“ Sir, the preaching house is my own ; it does not belong to the conference, and surely I may have who I please to preach in it. I believe Mr. Moorhouse lives the life of a christian, and he preaches the methodist doctrine ; I shall have him to preach upon a vacant sabbath if I choose,” accordingly the gentleman came for me one sunday morning ? and I went

I went with him, and preached to the people, and God was graciously pleased to water our souls, and increase our spiritual strength. This gave huge offence to some of the preachers, and others, who knew nothing of the real cause of my being turned out of the connection. However as the preaching house did not belong to the conference, the preachers thought it advisable to pass it over in silence, untill the next conference, which was about six months after this happened ; and was held at London in July 1788.

It seems the case was laid before that August assembly, and Mr. W-t-f-n a man of a fierce countenance, was appointed to travel in this circuit, invested with full power by the conference, to bear down all before him, by breaking to pieces, and stamping the residue under his feet. As soon as he came to my friends who called the little preaching house his own, he began to exercise that power with which he was invested ; crying out, " I am not to preach where Mr. Moorhouse preaches---I am ordered by the conference to take another house in the town, and to preach there---Moorhouse---Moorhouse---that wrote that scurrilous letter, and exposed the preachers ! and Mr. W-f-y ! I am not to preach where he preaches, &c. &c. &c." What a confirmation of the prophets words " Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou " Isai. chap 65, ver 5. He then began to traduce me all round the country, telling the same groundless untruths the third year after I had been "*expelled*," that had been spread with much diligence the two preceeding years. " Mr. Moorhouse left the connection---he is disaffected---he exposed the preachers---he wrote against Mr. W-f-y, &c. &c." This last sentence was enough (he did not need to mention any other crime

crime that ever I did in all my life) among many of the methodists. For there is much truth in this our day in that passage in the Arminian magazine for 1784 page 350 which runs thus.

“But St. Augustine says ”---When St. Augustine’s passion was heated, his word is not worth a rush. And here is the secret. St. Augustine was angry at Pelagius. Hence he slandered and abused him (as his manner was) without fear or shame. And St. Augustine was then in the Christian world, what Aristotle was afterward. There needed no other proof of any assertion, than “*ipse dixit* : St. Augustine said it.”

One would think that St. Augustine’s spirit, and the blind prejudice of his followers was come to life again. But my present design is not to make things look so black as I might. So I “drop it.”

While Mr. W-tf-n was calumniating my character all round the country for about six months, the gentleman often fetched me to preach in his little preaching house, and God was graciously pleased to power out his spirit upon us, and make our meetings exceeding pleasant, and profitable, to many precious souls. Several people began to cleave to me, and told me and others, that their souls were seldom so happy under any body’s preaching, as they were under mine. This seemed to give fresh offence to Mr. W-tf-n and some of his brother preachers, however, he got to my warm hearted friends, and blackened me so well, that he turned their heads ; and then upon Sunday the 1st of February, 1789, he got into the pulpit, and after preaching, he proclaimed in the face of the congregation, “I shall give consent for Mr. H. to preach here on Wednesday night next, after that we think it our duty to withdraw untill you find us another house to preach in.”

in " I walked out with the congregation, and he stopped the society to blacken my character thoroughly; he in the pulpit, and my warm hearted friends whose heads he had turned, standing below, and I gone away; they gave me a thorough dressing.

He began to tell the people the reason of his proceedings, not only his *conference orders*, but a private letter lately received from the Rev. Mr. W-1--y, which he pulled out and read, and then exclaimed " Many of the methodists are bad people, or else Mr. Moorhouse is a scandalous fellow," my warm hearted friends began to brow beat the gentleman, the owner of the house, and plead that I should never preach in that house more: and the reasons they gave were strong, and powerful, the same as in the forementioned magazine "*Ipse dixit*" the Rev. Mr W----y said so.

One stood up to speak for me; but the preacher said " whoever takes Mr. Moorhouse's part are not his friends," this is a new branch of logic. But as I do not intend to write all that passed between that preacher in the pulpit, and the people below, talking two or three at once, for near half an hour? I shall only remark, that after this preacher had slandered me behind my back all over the neighbourhood for about six months, and now in the pulpit, without ever speaking one word to my face, though I was often in his company: he proclaimed to his audience, "*If Mr. Moorhouse will come to me and acknowledge his fault, I will do all I can to get leave for him to preach in the preaching house; I will manage his cause, as well as I can.*" Certainly this is conference logic upon the full stretch, if it be screwed a little tighter, I think it will be like Dr. Watts's

" Two old flutes, and ne'er a string;

" Or none beside the bass.

If this gentleman is not a member of the "Deed Poll" I humbly move that he be elected one upon the first day of the next yearly assembly ; he executes his conference orders with such a grace, either in, or out of the pulpit. He is cut for any dirty work, *the conference may think fit or necessary* to employ him about. He will do it "*without either fear, or shame.*"

When I was turned out of the connection, I was represented to be one of the vilest wretches in the world ? and my crimes so abominably scandalous as to be "*beyond the reach of mercy*" I. P-d, but when the preachers has abused, and slandered me "*without either fear, or shame*" for near three years, they propose admitting me as a *local preacher* among the methodists, if I will *acknowledge my fault* without saying one word about my repentance. Now here is the secret. They began to fear that I should lay my case before the public, and they knew it would be little for the credit of either their system or practice ; but if *I would acknowledge myself an offender*, then my mouth would be for ever stopped. And "We whose names are underwritten" could ride in triumph to the next conference by six or eight at once in the stage coach. This was a long-headed scheme. But God foresees all things.

In the debate several people observed that their souls had been very much blessed by my preaching ; but one of *them* cried out "I believe Judas was a good preacher, for aught I know." Is this the work the methodist preachers are so much afraid of being "*hurt* ?" as I am a lover of truth ; I will strike at this work, and in the name, and by the power of God, I will sheath my broad sword of etherial temper in the bowels of this scandalous "*work*" and while it lies bleeding upon the ground
gasp

gasping for breath ; rise up ye old Samuels, and come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the mighty ; and assist in hewing this cloven footed Agag in pieces before God, draw your Jerusalem blades and “*strike at*” this abominable, scandalous “*work*” this work is a reproach to any people. And are these the men who threaten me with “*law*” for wounding their characters with a private letter ? go hide your heads for shame. I think you will make yourselves as contemptible before the people, as you have been honourable. What will you do ? will you do as Dicky said ? “*The preachers will go to law with Mr. Moorhouse*” this seems to be the last shift. And I am sorry to say, that I fear true religion which was like a pillar of fire to guide, and guard the preachers from all evil (in some) is become as a lamp extinguished ; nothing but a disagreeable smell. By the grace of God I will stand up for the truth, and if an officer is authorized by the next conference, to seize, and drag me to some prison, or dungeon : Jeremiah’s God shall be my God. And if another come with his conference orders to sell up that little property my dear wife had before she was acquainted with methodist preachers, and I fall a sacrifice for the sake of truth ; I fall in good company ; the will of the Lord be done.

That doctrine which I laboured to feed other people’s souls with, has often been a comfort to mine : to think, that when man had ruined both body and soul by his iniquities ; that Christ should lay down his life in the manner he did upon the cross, whereby he procured salvation for his enemies, even the forgiveness of sins and grace ; yea, purifying grace, in order to cleanse us from all unrighteousness ; that we might be enabled to serve the living and true God : and that our souls should be habitations for God’s glorious

glorious presence to dwell in ; giving us comfort in all our afflictions, consolation in all our sorrows, guiding our weak helpless souls through the dark valley of the shadow of death, and up to the regions of everlasting life ; though we are not worthy of the least of God's mercies. But suppose there were ten thousand new members added to the methodist societies this year, with as much religion as some preachers of this soul saving, heart chearing doctrine, how then ? would they not be a greater scandal to religion, than they were when they possessed none ? may the Lord rend the heavens, and come down, and undertake his own glorious cause for Jesus's sake.

When the " Deed Poll " made its appearance, I can truly say it did not grieve me because I was not a chosen member. But the shameful usage my wife and I have met with from its honourable members ; the downfall of religion among the methodists ; and the corruption that is got into the " *Deed Poll* " conferences, has been no small grief.

Now I will ask the public whether they think my conduct ; or the conduct of " We whose names are underwritten " has brought a blot upon the methodist cause, and the work of God ; a blot, not to be washed out for ages to come. Our souls may be cleansed from all blots in this life by the blood of the lamb. But I am sorry to add ; the conduct of some great, good, useful, but mistaken men, will be a blemish in history, untill saints and angels cry out " Come Lord Jesus, come quickly."

Sileby, February. 6. 1789.

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